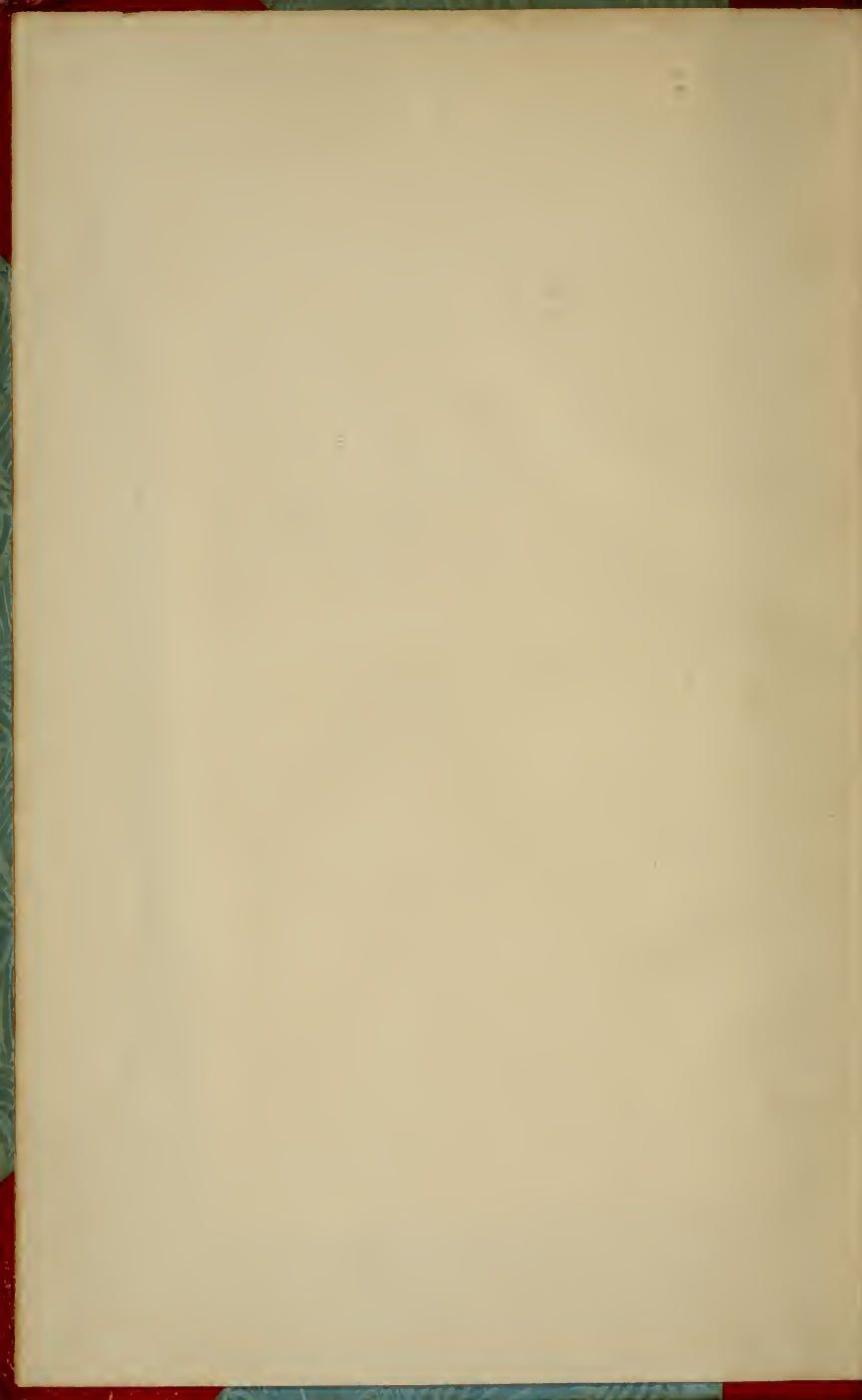


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GUARDS
HUSSARS' AND INFANTRY.

ADVENTURES OF
HARRY AUSTIN.

BY
AN OFFICER.

"Then wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale."
MARMION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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GUARDS
HUSSARS AND INFANTRY
ADVENTURES OF
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CHAPTER I.

ON my arrival in town, I found a letter from the Adjutant of the regiment, the same who so politely initiated Lord Mantar into the mysteries of still-hunting; by which I was informed that, having received orders for embarkation for foreign service, I was to join forthwith—and, as they were then on their march to Deal,—to that place was I commanded to repair.

Exclusive of this official notification, was a pithy postscript from the commanding officer, in which he intimated that, my leave having expired some two days previous, and the regiment being about to embark instanter, he could not sanction the absence of any officer at so critical a period; and he ended with the laconic information that, unless he found me at Deal on his arrival, he would cause me to be suspended with the least possible delay.

My notions of military despotism had never expanded to such an extent as the Colonel's more enlightened mind, on such subjects, seemed capable of embracing; and, thinking it a matter of small moment whether I arrived at Deal a day or two sooner or later, I had half resolved to take my time, and perfectly suit my own convenience. Yet, on a second perusal of the letter,—which I vainly strove to regard as a

pleasant joke and unmeaning threat on the part of my correspondent,—I thought it would not be amiss were I to call on the agents for further information ; but what was my surprise at hearing from them that, so far from its being written in jest, unless I started off without delay, the regiment would reach Deal before I could be half way there ; and the colonel, I was told, was a gentleman who would put his threat into execution as certainly and as effectually as I could desire. The transports, added the agent, have gone round to Deal, where your regiment will arrive to-morrow ; if possible, they will then embark ; and, with the first fair wind, sail for Portugal. “By this you will perceive,” he continued, “there is but little time to spare ; but if our house can be of any accommodation to you, we shall be happy in attending to your wishes in as far as lays in our power.” And here it is

but justice to remark that the liberality uniformly displayed by the old establishment, in days gone by, is fully acted up to by the present partners of this munificent firm.

Under existing circumstances, it appeared to me not altogether advisable to neglect the colonel's mandate; so, expressing my thanks for the information received and for the kind assistance tendered, I departed from the house for the express purpose of putting my resolution in practice, but, on turning the corner of Craig's-Court leading into Charing-Cross, my progress was arrested by the interesting figure of the exquisite Lord Mantar.

And a most marvellous vehicle was he chariot-eering. There never was, nor ever will be, one like it again. It was neither dennet, stanhope, tilbury, drag, sledge, nor dog-cart; but a combination of the worst points in each concentrated into one locomotive machine.

Determined that it should be conspicuous even, if not *distingué*, the fabricator had painted his offspring perfectly white ; and, as if to shelter its purity from contamination, he extended over its frame a huge black covering something in the style of the present cabriolet hood—but, unlike that more modern invention, it much more closely resembled the black head of an overgrown white maggot. In this conveyance, drawn by a powerful and splendid horse adorned with white harness, reposed the self-sufficient and empty headed Baron, who, on beholding my humble self, condescendingly checked his steed so suddenly as to bring him on his haunches, and, immediately descending from his throne, extended the perfumed glove of his fore-finger towards me.

“Ha ! Austin, my dear fellow,” he exclaimed, “who would have thought of meeting you in

London? Why, at this very moment, I fancied you were scouring over the fertile valleys of Spain, much to your own personal hazard and the annoyance of your creditors—Egad! I'm delighted to find you have too much tact to leave town at the beginning of the season, for such low pursuits. You'r right, Austin,—must be right. I did the same, you know—couldn't stand it—no one could—so, you've really cut,—eh? Left the service? Bravo! I'd have bet a thousand you'd soon tire of it—Ah, well! But come, tell me, how's the wood nymph? Eh! Sly fellow. Good place that—high trees,—bubbling fountain,—old oak—made on purpose, eh? no mistake—in town, I suppose—quiet lodgings. Eh? Funny old man, your uncle, very—touched though—a li—ittle, eh? You understand.” And for fear I should not comprehend, he pointed his little-finger

towards his own brain; the former of which in all probability possessed more sense than the latter.

“Your lordship is very kind, in having remembered so minutely what alone concerns myself.” I answered, as soon as my companion paused for breath. “But allow me to state that the conclusions you have arrived at are all, and equally, erroneous. In the first place, the lady, for whom you enquire and whom you do *not* know, is many miles from town: and secondly I have *not* left the army, neither have I any intention of so doing. On the contrary, I am at this moment about to start for Deal, where I expect to find my regiment on the point of embarking for foreign service.”

“Why, you don’t say so, *mon cher*?” Answered the gallant Baron. “How horrible! Surely you don’t mean to say you’re in earnest?”

“In most serious earnest, I assure you.”

“Egad !” then exclaimed this essence of nothing—assuming a look of horror, and placing one foot upon the step of his vehicle ready to start at the shortest notice—“Egad, then you’re a younger brother after all, eh?”

“I am at a loss to know how my being eldest, youngest, or only, child of my parents, can interest you ; but,” I continued laughing, “since it does appear to affect your Lordship so much, I can state that I *am* an only son.”

“My dear sir,” replied my companion withdrawing his foot from the step—“ten thousand thanks : you little know what a weight of agony you have relieved me of.”

“How ?” enquired I, my curiosity being considerably excited to know what influence my nativity could exert over his Lordship’s destiny.

“Simply this,” was the reply ; “I have been

talking to you for full five minutes, my dear friend, in a crowded thoroughfare; and I pledge you my honour I was never yet known to waste one fifth of that period on any, but the *spes gregis*, or the sire of a house himself."

"Here's a greater fool than Villiers," thought I, as the remembrance of the latter's repugnance to enter a hackney coach recurred to me. And, muttering between my teeth something resembling in sound "stupid ass—consummate idiot." I turned to depart, when his Lordship, laying his beringed finger on my arm, offered me a commission in his regiment.

"A commission in *your* regiment, my Lord," I replied with some astonishment. "May I enquire what corps has the supreme felicity of hailing you as its commandant?"

"A commission in *my* regiment, Mr. Austin? Yes, sir, a commission in my regiment, and a

very good regiment it is ; I shall be charmed to give you a company, or any thing you please, from the drum-major to the major of the corps ; but, mark you, I've never seen them,—oh, never ;” and here he shook his scented head most significantly, and, approaching quite close, he whispered in my ear,—“ And what’s more, I don’t much think I ever shall, for,” he continued, in a still lower key, and holding me tight by the button, “ I’ve got a promise,—now you know this is, of course, *entre nous*,—I’ve got a promise *that they shan’t be embodied*.” And, digging his odoriferous fingers into my ribs, by way of enforcing the pungency of his wit, the gallant Colonel of this embryo army pulled up his shirt collars until they completely hid the sides of his face ; and doubtlessly considered himself as skilful a manœuverer in diplomacy as Lord Wellington, himself, in practical tactics.

Not being ambitious of such rapid promotion, I declined the flattering offer; and, with many expressions of regret at my excessive short-sightedness and bad taste, as his Lordship was pleased to designate my refusal, we shook hands and parted.

I afterwards heard that the promise of his militia not being called out, whether from forgetfulness or design, had not been adhered to; for called out they certainly were, and, on the clothing being issued, a rather ludicrous circumstance occurred.

On examining the packages containing the apparel for this splendid cohort, it proved by far too gigantic in make for the use of the diminutive men destined to wear it. This was an awkward dilemma for the noble Colonel, he himself not being peculiarly fertile in expedients. What was to be done? As for serving

it out in its present state, that was impossible; for their gallant commander professed his willingness to die rather than march through the streets at the head of a regiment whose coats hung on their shoulders like the costume of a scarce-crow in a corn field. He was sorely puzzled, until at last he bethought him of summoning to his aid his principal counsellor on all state affairs, who came at his bidding in the form and substance of his valet.

No sooner was this trusty agent made acquainted with the cause of his master's distress, than quoting the rapid diminution of size in his Lordship's flannel waistcoats as a case in point, he pronounced immersion in water as an infallible specific for the disease.

"I have it! egad, I have it!" exclaimed the delighted Colonel; "send for the quarter-master,—send for the quarter-master,—egad, I have

it now ! I'll shrink them all in no time." And so he did, for in less than a couple of hours, full eight hundred suits of His Majesty's militia clothing were safely deposited at the bottom of the main arch of York bridge, where they were to remain for some days.

But what a dreadful commotion it occasioned in the town; the tailors swore that the Colonel's novel method of altering clothing was enough to breed a mutiny among all the cross-legged generation in Europe; while the gallant chief expected no less than a vote of thanks from both houses, for his economizing discovery: all was anxiety until the period arrived for fishing up His Majesty's wardrobe. The bridge was crowded with spectators—the Colonel was in ecstasies — the tailors in despair; — the grappling-irons were thrown in, and the regimental clothing was dragged out.

The Colonel was right ; shrunk it was, to a certainty, and as much so as the most diminutive mortal could desire. But, alas ! instead of the bright red jackets, which, a few days before, had been consigned to the deep, there appeared eight hundred suits of motley purple,—the worsted lace on the front of each making the dress exactly resemble so many livid corpses, with their white ribs protruding.

The tailors exulted—the Colonel resigned, having first paid into the Treasury some few hundred pounds, as the price of his praiseworthy practical experiment. And with that exploit ended the military career of my noble friend.

CHAPTER II.

I HAD just paid my bill at Steven's, and was stepping into the carriage, when a hackney-coach drove up to the door ; and, with his clothes torn and disordered, his face bleeding, and without any covering to his feet, out rushed the gentleman who, when I had last seen him, was sitting *vis à vis* to the Persian, with his face blackened in the market-place at Norwich. Something had evidently disconcerted him not a little, for he was in a most inordinate passion ; but, the instant he recognized my countenance,

he appeared determined to pour forth his sorrows into my sympathizing ear.

But it so chanced at *that* moment, he was about the very last person whom I was desirous of encountering; for, exclusive of the dislike I entertained against him, on account of the unwarrantable attack his pot-valiant courage prompted him to exhibit on a former occasion, I was somewhat at a loss to know how far his knowledge extended as to the share I had taken, which, by the by, was equally as unjustifiable, in blacking his face preparatory to his drive with the Oriental; neither was I gratified at discovering any obstacle rising up, which could in the slightest degree retard my departure from town. In accordance with which feelings I endeavoured to evade the new comer, yet, notwithstanding my assertion that I had not a moment to spare, he was resolved not to sanction my departure.

Finding immediate escape utterly impracticable, and judging the easiest method of getting rid of my companion would be by apparently acquiescing with his wishes, I accompanied him into the hotel.

“My dear sir,” shaking me by the hand, with as much apparent pleasure as if I had been a twenty thousand pound prize in the lottery; “My dear sir, words are inadequate to express half what I have lately suffered. The most flagrant and gratuitous insults imaginable have been heaped upon me. I have been irretrievably disgraced—I feel it deeply, sir—deeply do I feel it *here*,” pressing with both his fists the region of the heart, “and deeply shall it be atoned for.”

Here it comes, thought I—that infernal blacking and the pale-faced Cornet.

“To be made a laughing-stock of,” he con-

tinued, "to be cajoled, and flattered, for the express purpose of being then held up to ridicule, I cannot, sir, and by Heavens, I *will* not, submit to it—I'll have revenge."

"That's right," I exclaimed ; but not feeling quite certain that I was not the object on whom it was to be vented.

"You may well say that, sir," was the answer, and, rising from his chair, his countenance pourtraying a mixture of rage and hunger, he quietly rang for breakfast.

"My dear sir," said I, determined to ascertain what the creature was driving at, and also the nature of the insult he had received : for upon re-examination of his appearance and clothes, I could not but imagine some more recent affliction to have visited him than the small affair on Saint Patrick's night.

"My dear sir, I am wholly at a loss to con-

jecture what could have occurred to occasion you so much and evident annoyance. If I can be of any service, command me; but if not, my time is extremely precious; and I have but very little of it to spare."

"You may well say that," he replied, "but wait one instant, my dear sir, and I'll tell you all. Oh, lord! how thirsty I am—here, Turner, bring some soda water. Excuse me, sir," he continued, holding his red head between his equally rubicund paws. "I'm in a perfect fever—my brain seems as if bursting through the scull—you little know, sir, what I've gone through."

I now began to think it somewhat more than problematical that my friend Holkam, the pale-faced Cornet, or the Irish Baronet, or probably all three together, might, by some means or other, have again contrived to mix themselves

up with this gentleman's grievances; and, for ought I knew to the contrary, were the very fountain-head from which flowed the sufferer's distress; neither was I far wrong in my supposition, for, after having swallowed the contents of half a dozen soda water bottles, with as much ease as if his throat had been the main pipe of the Grand Junction water-works, he gave me the following account.

“Like a damned fool as I am,” he commenced, to which I of course bowed assent, “notwithstanding all the miseries that happened to me on that infernal Saint Patrick's night, I was idiot enough to allow myself to be again entrapped into dining at the mess of that abominable regiment. May they all be cursed — Cornets—kettle-drums, and all! Well, sir, in accordance with my promise, I last evening repaired to their barracks.”

“Last evening!” I exclaimed, in astonishment, “you must have travelled with some celerity, sir.”

“You may well say celerity. But believe me it was not without a pretty considerable lot of apologies and explanations that I consented to dine, after what occurred on my former visit; but, at length, I did look over the past. But,” he continued, crushing an egg till the yolk flew in his face, “if ever I forgive *this* trick, may — Well, no matter—curse them all! But, sir, as I was observing, I did at length allow myself to be persuaded to accept their apologies, and last night I dined there as a sort of acknowledgment of reconciliation.

“Well, sir, the dinner passed as usual, I did not drink more than is my custom; but whether they drugged the wine, or what they did to it, I know not, but I remember experiencing

a horrible sensation of suffocation, after which came an incessant ringing in my ears, as if all the metallic machinery in Europe was in full play round my cranium. Suddenly, this maddening din ceased, and I found myself violently shaken by the arm. All was black as Erebus, I strove to open my eyes, but it was impossible. Every thing was clothed in impenetrable darkness, I endeavoured to speak—but my lips refused to move—not a sound could I utter—I thought I was dead. I then fancied myself bewitched, when again the tugging at my arm fully apprised me that, at all events, the sense of feeling was not entirely suspended.”

“Why, where on earth could you have got to?” I exclaimed.

“You may well ask that,” growled my informant, stuffing a whole muffin into each side of his cheeks, “but listen, sir, listen; and then

judge whether or not I have cause for complaint;—well, sir, horrible as you may suppose my situation to have been, it was perfect luxury to what I felt afterwards.”

“Indeed! and pray what might that have been?”

“You may well say what might that have been? Well, sir, half doubting my own identity, I raised my hands to my head, in the hope of rubbing my eyes into vision, when I found—now, you ’d hardly credit the assertion unless I told you—I say, sir, I found—now, what *do* you suppose I found, eh?”

“How can I possibly conjecture?” was my reply.

“How the devil should you!” he exclaimed; “why, sir,—I found I’d got no face.”

“No what?” I rejoined, making two extensive strides towards the door, under the suppo-

sition that the occurrences of the previous night had materially disordered his brain—"No what?"

"No face, I repeat, sir; I say I'd got no face, —neither eyes, nose, mouth, nor any thing else —all was as smooth as polished marble, excepting two long canes, growing out of where had once been my nostrils, like the tusks of an elephant, and another from the aperture which was formerly my mouth; and through these three orifices I wheezed and whistled like a broken-winded musician puffing through a Scotch bag-pipe. I no longer doubted the tenets of the Pythagorean school, but was satisfactorily convinced that I had been transformed into a beast. My sufferings were indeed horrible—I imagined I was walled up like the condemned nuns of old; but the excruciating pain I endured when attempting to re-

move the new surface of my countenance, proved it but too evidently a part of my natural formation ; and, at length, I arrived at the conclusion that, similarly situated with the creeping creatures of the earth, I had cast my old skin, and was going through a probationary course of oblivion."

" You must have found it extremely unpleasant ?" I remarked, in a tone of condolence.

" Unpleasant ! eh, you said unpleasant ? why, yes, unpleasant with a vengeance : but listen—in a short time I felt an indescribable grating on my nerves, as though my new physiognomy was undergoing a process of scraping ; but being deprived of the power of seeing, or using my voice, I resolved to make the best use of my ears.

" 'Dang it ! Bill,' exclaimed a gruff voice, in accents indicative of considerable astonish-

ment, and at the extreme pitch of his lungs,—
‘Dang it! Bill, come here, mon, come.’

“‘What’s the shindy now?’ answered an equally unmelodious vocalist, who I concluded, was the individual addressed.

“‘Why, I’m blowed, if here arn’t a chap in the Norwich, with a head like a turnip, and his chops plastered with mortar,’ was the reply.
‘Crackee, what a go!’

“‘Lord! Mr. Williams,’ simpered a female voice, the owner having been attracted to the spot by the exclamation of the last speaker.
‘*Hoh, ow horrible!!* and lookee, lookee, its got a snout, like the spout of my tea-pot,—*Ho, eavens! vat can it be? Lord! ow it vags its head.*’

“And I dare say,” said my acquaintance, breaking off the thread of his story,—“I dare say I did wag my head, for I most certainly thought myself bewitched.”

“No wonder,” I rejoined, “but what came next?”

“You may well ask that;” continued my communicative ally, “I’ll quickly let you know what came next; for, no sooner had the lady passed her observation than some other wretch roared out, ‘Gracious me! it’s the Bonassus.’

“‘It’s Van Buchell’s wife from Surgeons’ Hall:’ cried a third.

“‘It’s the white statue come off his horse in Hanover-square:’ yelled a fourth.

“‘Dang it, hit him:’ bellowed my first acquaintance.

“‘Hit him!’ echoed another.

“‘Here goes,’ said Bill; and a blow from some quarter laid my right arm powerless by my side. The pain I suffered was excessive; and, fearing a repetition, I essayed to scream and kick, thereby demonstrating my unwilling-

ness to die, as far as in my power laid, but the more energetic I became, the more terrific were the sounds issuing through my tusks, until, driven distracted through pain and horror, I seized a substance which happened to be Bill's proboscis, and, digging my remaining available thumb into his eye, brought him somewhat nearer on a par with myself.

"'Help ! help !' shouted the agonized ostler.

"'It's the Cock-lane ghost ;' cried one.

"'It's the Vampire from Astley's ;' said another.

"'It's the devil himself ;' shrieked the chamber-maid, and off they all started, leaving me alone.

"I was not long permitted to remain uninterrupted ; and I soon heard footsteps stealthily approaching, as though it was more than surmised I had already vanished from the spot,

carrying coach, shed, and all. But on finding me still stationary, their courage assumed a more palpable form.

“‘This is the most extraordinariest thing as is,’ slowly drawled out a voice hitherto strange to my ear,—“but as to its being a ghost, or a devil, the thing ’s right ridick’lous. Howsom’dever, I must acknowledge this to be *marbleous*, its an uman being, and no mistake,’ he continued, after having given me a not very moderate poke in the stomach, with some long haft or stick, and which I was of course unable to guard against, yet duly acknowledged by a sharp and piercing whistle through my tusks. ‘An *uman* creature, doubtless—I’ve heard of many a contrivance for keeping out cold when a travelling, but blow me, if ever I heard of a face of plaster afore. Lord! how fond his wife must be of him. Well, I’m blessed if he ar’nt mortared up like a Stilton.’

“‘Dang it, Mr. Jennings,’ chimed in the ostler, whose eye I had been amusing my thumb with,—‘I’ve hit it—I’ve hit it.’

“‘Hit what, sirrah?’ interrogated the great man, whom I afterwards discovered to be the beadle.

“‘Why, hit it, Mr. Jennings, that ’s all,—I says, war’nt that the sort of stuff as they clapped on that chap’s face as was hung last Friday, when they wanted to cast him, as they called it?’

“‘Whew,—w—h—e—w,’ whistled Mr. Jennings,—‘here ’s fish come to kettle, and now, when I come for to go for to think, I sees no reason whatsoever for supposing this ’ere plastered man ar’nt a murderer likewise; and, now I looks closer at him, I feels convinced in my own mind that he ’s an hindividual of loose and abandoned moral character.’

“‘So do I—so do I,’ shouted a dozen voices,

only too glad of an opportunity of giving unbounded credence to any tale of horror or mystery.

“As for myself, I felt that the world in which I had existed was now for ever closed against me. It is true I heard my primitive finder declare I was in the ‘Norwich,’ and the beadle had assured his friends I was *un uman* being. But as regarded my own knowledge of my locality, I might have been in a mail, or in Satan’s country house, for all the distinction I could make: and in respect to *what* I was, not having Buffon’s Natural History by me, and what’s more, not having any one to read it—for I could not see a word even had I possessed it,—I had long since given up all hope of ascertaining.

“Nevertheless, I felt little inclined to pass for a murderer under any circumstances; so,

throwing up my hands, and shaking my mortal visage, I endeavoured, as far as laid in my power, to demonstrate my dissent from the conclusion they had arrived at.

“ ‘Lawk!’ squeaked the chamber-maid, ‘*ow hagitated it his*—hit vants to *hescape*.’

“ ‘I don’t by no manner of means dubitate it, madam,’ answered the parish oracle; ‘but if there’s any power in office, hit shant.’ And to make good his promise to the lady of the bed-chamber, I was speedily handcuffed.

“ ‘Pray,’ enquired the beadle, ‘did the coach what brought this ere plastered mortal waggon through Bury?’

“ ‘Yes, in course it did,’ was the answer.

“ ‘Then as sure as dickens,’ continued the gold-laced hatted functionary, ‘this here’s the chap as was to have been hanged this blessed morning for having skivered the young *oman* in the most

oribblist of manners, by cutting her throat to such an amount that the coroner and the whole of the jury sat in the gap ?

“ Here a thrill of horror appeared to run through the assembled auditors ; and, for my share of feeling, I received two smart blows on the shins, and one or two on the apex of my head. But by this time I was becoming quite callous to the numerous attacks that were momentarily made on my carcass.

“ ‘ The whole thing’s as plain as a charity boy’s waistcoat,’ added the beadle ; ‘ It’s what I call varnished and inclusive evidence. You sees, gemmen, that afore they hanged this here felon,’ here another poke with the stick accompanied by two taps on the shin bone—‘ they wanted to take an expression of his countenance, and, having put on the plaster, they left him to dry, when the ungrateful creatur cut his stick,

and hid himself in this 'ere mail, thinking to evacuate the just laws of his country, and disappoint all the honest folk, who, I dare to say, are at this here moment very much aggravated at not seeing him executed.'

" 'What a shame ! What a villain !' resounded on all sides, as the conclusion the idiot had arrived at harmonized but too well with the excited feelings of the ignorant bystanders, to admit of a doubt being expressed as to my guilt.

" 'What shall we do with him?' asked another; and, while this knotty point was debating, one of the group acknowledged having been present at the trial of the culprit whose character, much against my will, I was then supporting. So, to remove all doubt as to my identity, it was resolved to take off my outer covering forthwith; and, to do them justice, they were as anxious to

get rid of my mask in the hope of proving me the most cold-blooded murderer in existence, as they had before been tardy in relieving my distress.'

"In due time, by dint of scraping and breaking, my infernal case came off, bringing with it the whole of my whiskers by the roots, and most of my hair as an accompaniment. The gentleman in the hobnailed shoes was condescending enough to recognize me instantaneously as the murderer whom he had seen tried and condemned at Bury; adding, by way of a final clincher to his assurance that 'he could have picked me out among a thousand.'

"When the use of my eyes was restored to me, I was sitting the sole occupant of the inside of the Norwich mail—the horses having long since been taken off—under a shed in the Inn yard of the White Horse, Fetter-lane; and sur-

rounded by at least a dozen ostlers, waiters, chambermaids, *et hoc genus omne*.

“ I now began to draw my own conclusions as to the origin of the business ; and again I traced the practical performances of the pale-faced Cornet and his friends, with whom I had dined. How I got in the mail I know not ; nor have I the slightest recollection of the honour conferred by attempting to take a cast of my countenance ; but that the entire proceeding had its origin in some of the members of that abominable regiment—curse them all—I did not entertain a doubt : but, to add to my despair, they had robbed me of my purse, pocket-book, papers, and every article by which it would have been even barely possible to prove myself a different person from what I was suspected.

“ The current of opinion ran strongly against me, yet I was determined to attempt an expla-

nation, but might well have saved myself the trouble, for not one syllable would they attend to, much less believe. Again and again, I endeavoured to point out the almost impossibility of my being the murderer at Bury, as the guard could prove I was put into the mail at Norwich,—not one word would they credit. ‘What gentleman,’ they asked, ‘would voluntarily stuff up his eyes, nose, and mouth, with mortar, preparatory to a journey, and then get into a mail, well knowing he had not a farthing with which to pay his fare. Besides which, here was a man ready to swear to the culprit at whose trial for murder he had been present—no ! no !’ Back to Bury they swore I should go by that night’s mail—and, to ensure the certainty of enjoying my society, they very considerably strapped me to the seat.

“ ‘I was present when you were tried,’ said

the hob-nailed identifier, as they closed the coach-door; 'I heard you condemned, and, please the pigs, by gum, I'll see you hanged!' "

"Your situation was becoming most interestingly embarrassing," I remarked, laughing.

"Embarrassing with a vengeance," he replied, "but worse was to come, for presently the period arrived for the mails to proceed as usual to the foundry at Millbank for examination; and straightway was the accursed 'Norwich' linked to half a dozen others, and dragged along by one horse. I of course became the principal feature in the pageant, much to the gratification of my escort, composed of all the blackguards in the neighbourhood,—and equally to the astonishment of my uncle, whose heir I expected to become; and who, as bad luck would have it, was setting his watch at the Horse Guards, as my triumphant procession passed by."

“That was, indeed, provoking. But how did you finally escape?” I asked.

“By the merest chance; fortunately, when depriving me of my purse, watch &c., those abominable dragoons—curse them all—overlooked, at least so I imagine, a ring of some value which I wore on my finger. Well, sir, after my return from Millbank, the chambermaid, instigated doubtlessly by curiosity, frequently approached—though with much caution—to scrutinize the supposed murderer; and, taking advantage of my opportunity, I endeavoured to impress her with a conviction of my innocence, which having effected, through the agency of the sparkling brilliant, I obtained pen, ink, and paper; and my new friend forwarding my note, my lawyer at length made his appearance; and I was liberated.”

“Now, sir,” said he in conclusion, “you have

an account of the occasion of my present visit to London, and if I don't have revenge—why I don't, that's all.” And, to prove he was in earnest, he slapped his thigh with a force as though he owed the limb a spite ; and assumed as ferocious an aspect as if he had been engaged at Drury Lane, at a guinea a week, to do the Ogre in the next Pantomime.

As may be supposed, I condoled with him greatly in his misfortune, but again declaring my intention of instantly starting for Deal, enquired in what way I could be of service to him ?

“Of infinite service, my dear sir, I assure you,” was the immediate reply. “Those *gentlemen*—if indeed they are gentlemen—But I say nothing, though to be sure, as the saying is ; ‘ If so be you are a gentleman, then behave as *sich*.’ Well, sir, the regiment to which these

gentlemen belong will commence its march this day for Deal ; you will therefore most probably meet."

"Most likely," I answered.

"In which case, sir," he resumed ; "you will greatly oblige me by delivering a message. Yes, sir," he continued, seeing my astonishment at his valour, now that the vinous influence no longer held him subject to its controul. "It is impossible for any man to put up with so gross an insult, without marking his opinion. Will you bear my message, sir ?"

I immediately professed my willingness to do so ; and enquired what was its purport ?

"Thanks, sir, thanks," was the reply. "Now, what I wish you to say is—" and here he pulled me into a remote corner of the room, and carefully guarding against the possibility of being overheard—"tell them," he whispered, "that,

in *my* opinion, they're *a set of sad, wild dogs.*" And away he sprung as if frightened at his own boldness—and I started off with the message to the regiment.

CHAPTER III.

THE advanced guard of the regiment marched into Deal by one road, as I drove in by another; and, accordingly, I lost no time in waiting on the Colonel, by whom, on having introduced myself, I was warmly welcomed; no allusion whatever being made to the little memorandum conveyed in the Adjutant's epistle.

The transports were lying in the Downs, together with three or four men-of-war; and, as we were ordered to sail the first favourable wind, no time was lost in getting the men and horses on board, but this was not to be effected

without considerable delay and difficulty. And, as two other cavalry regiments marched into the town the following morning, some days elapsed prior to our being ready for sea.

Meanwhile the officers remained on shore, excepting those on duty; but, having no mess equipage or barracks, we slept and dined at the hotel; and, as the wind continued perseveringly adverse, many were the delightful parties and expeditions got up and prosecuted by the officers of the navy and ourselves, with whom we were invariably on most excellent terms.

To a person who had seen Deal in 1813, with its thronged streets and busy indication of some important event about to take place; when it was barely possible to procure a bed on any terms; and when the perpetual whirl of carriages of all kinds and descriptions, rapidly arriving, crowded with the members of the two

pugnacious professions, excluded the possibility of sleep, even to those who were so fortunate as to have obtained a place whereon to lay their wearied limbs; and, to any of those who unavoidably witnessed the continual rows and disorders in the streets, the hurry and confusion in the inns, and the voracious tenacity with which the Jews, duns, and tradesmen, assailed their victims momentarily;—there would be some difficulty in assimilating that place of uproar with the quiet and inordinate dullness which the town now exhibits. At that time regiments were continually arriving for the purpose of joining Lord Wellington, to repair the losses of the last campaign, closing with the retreat from Burgos. Now, perhaps, one troop of cavalry detached from Canterbury, wears out its dull monotonous existence on the spot, never ceasing to wonder why they were sent there.

At seven o'clock I repaired by appointment to the Colonel's quarter, by whom I was conducted to the Hotel, where the officers had established their temporary mess; and, in all due form, I was separately and individually introduced to the members of the regiment then present. They were mostly very young men, and consequently delighted at the novel position in which they found themselves; and all equally anxious to join their comrades then in the field. But among my blue and gold-laced brethren, stood a tall, spare gentleman in red, of whom it may, perhaps, be amusing to my readers, were I to give a slight sketch. And, as what I witnessed of his peculiarities fully corroborated my informant's description of him, I had no reason to doubt the accuracy of the progress of his after career.

This gentleman was a captain in an infantry

regiment, and as gallant a corps as any that enrolls its badges and distinctions in that much abused and reviled work, commonly known by the name of "The Army List." Fortunately for him, he had the good luck to claim cousinship with an officer high in office, and whom he was pleased, in his absence, to designate as "my cousin Hal;" and, through the aid of the said "cousin Hal," the gentleman in red had been employed in the then lucrative occupation of recruiting for his own immediate corps; and of which description of bipeds he had ensnared about two hundred, principally through the aid and experience of his right hand man and prime minister, serjeant Hinde. The captain was at this time on his march to Canterbury, carrying with him his tail, and as, in accordance with military etiquette, he reported his arrival to our Colonel, so did our chief, conformably to

the established custom from time immemorial, request the honour of the pedestrian hero's company to dinner, which invitation having been accepted, his appearance is satisfactorily accounted for.

It is not improbable, from the following anecdote, but that some of my readers may chance to recognise our guest ; in which case, I am confident they will fully acquit me of any desire of holding up to ridicule the branch of the service of which this person was *not* the very flower ; and equally will they exonerate me from the charge of casting obloquy on the gallant regiment to which he belonged. Suffice it to say, he was an habitual and constitutional drunkard ; and, had it not been for the interest which I have before stated him to have possessed, the army would long since have been rid of his society. Yet, notwithstanding the power

of his "cousin Hal," his unfortunate malady was so publicly known that it was found impossible to advance him farther in the service. On the evening in question, not a person present had previously known of his existence; and his conduct consequently appeared more partaking of insanity than the effects of present indiscretion.

"Now, I call this damned bad wine, Colonel, damned bad;" and he closed his teeth, and shook his head, as if the acidity was circulating speedily through every crevice of his body.

"I'm extremely sorry, sir," was the reply; "but what can you expect at an inn, and particularly at such a place as this? Besides," continued the Colonel, laughing, "we, who may be ordered to embark to-night, feel little disposed to quarrel with what may possibly prove our last bottle in England."

“Is there any other wine you would prefer?” enquired an officer from the end of the table.

“Yes, to be sure there is,” growled the red warrior:—“who the devil do you think can drink this stuff? Here, waiter, bring a bottle of Burgundy, you devil, you!” and off ran the man of many occupations to consult with his master as to the quickest method of manufacturing it.

“I much fear,” remarked the occupant of the chair on the visitor’s right, “that the Burgundy in such a place as this will be scarcely more congenial to your palate than the wine you have already disapproved of.”

“What! do you grudge it?” was the wrathful rejoinder.

“Oh, certainly not,” replied the other. “Pray drink as much as you please; the more you consume the more gratifying to us.”

Meanwhile, the beverage miscalled Burgundy made its appearance, and was pompously placed, together with a long-necked glass, *vis à vis* to the thirsty gentlemen.

“There, sir, if the wine’s good, you’ll be gratified to your utmost desire,” he exclaimed, and straightway filling the long-necked glass, after holding it up to the light for a considerable period, and having prefaced the annihilation of its contents with a slow and solemn shake of the head, sufficiently indicative of the judgment about to be pronounced, he applied the rim of the crystal to his lips, and the liquid passed from the sight.

Opposite the gentleman, stood the waiter bowing and smirking most obsequiously, anxious, no doubt, to witness the effect so much composition of his own might have upon a human frame; but, lucky for the grinning

wight would it have been had his curiosity been somewhat tempered with discretion ; for, no sooner had the taste of the liquid made itself known to the palate of the imbibor than, taking a speedy, but most excellent, aim at the features of the waiter, the long-necked glass, as if by magic, passed from the fingers of the gentleman, and planted itself in broken fragments between the eyes of the servitor, where the pieces stuck out in goodly relief, as you may sometimes see bits of glass mortared on the top of an orchard wall.

“ I’m murdered ! oh, I am murdered ! ” roared the waiter, measuring his length on the floor ; and, in this instance, it was well for him that he had sought a recumbent position ; for the infuriated Captain, seizing the bottle which contained the remainder of the obnoxious liquid, hurled it as quick as thought in the same direc-

tion, but, not meeting the servant's skull as an impediment to its progress, it passed over the body of the prostrate wretch, and, spinning through two panes of the window, deposited itself on the beach, much to the astonishment and somewhat to the danger of divers juvenile conchologists who were then and there amusing themselves.

"You don't appear to like that wine better than the last, sir," quietly observed the Colonel, smiling.

"Wine! d'ye call *that* wine?" answered the enraged Captain: "blackening and sloe juice, sir, not a drop of wine fit for drinking—not a drop," he concluded, with a pretty considerable expressive oath, which he tacked on to the beginning and end of each sentence.

"We have n't got our own cellar here," joined in one of the younger officers, who began

to think they might have some fun with their new acquaintance, before the night was spent, "and such being the case, you cannot expect us to be answerable for the filth they choose to bring up, however much disguised it may be by name; but, there is one thing, I doubt not, they have excellent in the house, that is, if you ever condescend to drink such a beverage."

"What is it?" enquired the Captain.

"Brandy and water," was the immediate reply: upon which, as if acting under the influence of a galvanic battery, the long soldier rising from his seat, and stretching his gaunt body across half the room, shook the proposer's hand with a warmth and cordiality of feeling truly marvellous, considering their brief acquaintanceship.

"You're a trump, sir—a regulur trump," he exclaimed, "I always thought you Hussars a

parcel of snobs before—glad I've met you—brandy and water ! By the immortal God of war, sir, you're a gentleman—here, waiter, waiter ! !”

But the waiter was little disposed to answer the call of any one, being already well occupied under the table, in endeavouring to pick the fragments of the glass out of his face ; but in which employment he succeeded as slowly as his worst enemies could have prayed for.

“Come here, you skulking thief !” roared the officer ; and, expanding his long shanks to their utmost limit, he commenced a search under the mahogany, in quest of the wounded domestic, when, having ascertained his victim to be within reach of his gripe, he twined his bony forceps round his carcass, and drew him forth from his hiding-place, with as much ease and with as little ceremony as a boa-constrictor would have treated a rabbit.

“Let the poor devil go—let him go,” cried out several voices at once.

“Well, gentlemen, to please you, and more particularly as being your guest, I am bound to observe your wishes. I *will* let the ruffian escape, but look ye, sir,” he added to the bleeding plate-changer, “I’d recommend you not to *make* Burgundy again, my pippin, when it’s called for, that’s all—now be off.” When, for fear of there being any mistake as to the period of his recommended departure, the gentleman in red again put one prong of his before-mentioned forceps in motion, and, applying the same to that part of the domestic’s body more than once mentioned in Humphrey Clinker, he flew out by the door with a swiftness which could only be surpassed by the velocity with which the bottle had a few seconds previously passed out at the window.

In a short time, fresh waiters, carrying fresh glasses, made their appearance, followed by more fresh waiters, bearing all the appurtenances for the formation of brandy and water "hot with," at the sight of which, the visage of the guest beamed with a smile of satisfaction; and, as the steam of the hot and potent mixture ascended to the ceiling, so did his former furor and irritability appear to evaporate into air.

"Splendid stuff this, gentlemen, splendid!" exclaimed the Captain. "All we want now is a cigar, any objection to the flavour of the weed, Colonel?" Our guest was now becoming most marvellously courteous and polite. "Any objection, gentlemen?" To which being of course answered in the negative, he was proceeding to light his tobacco, when a waiter, entering the room, communicated some information for that individual's private ear.

“ Oh ! ah ! all right—tell him to come up,” was the Captain’s reply ; and, turning to us, he added, “ my sergeant—Sergeant Hinde—capital fellow—manages everything—called to report—any objection to his coming up ? ”

“ Oh ! none in the least : ” and, accordingly, in walked the non-commissioned officer in question. He was a steady-looking man, of about forty years of age, with rather a handsome, good-humoured countenance ; the muscles of which however, from long practice, he had drilled so as to be completely subservient to his will. On entering the room, he performed a most graceful salute, casting his right arm from his body, as though he never wished to be friends with it again, and afterwards slowly bringing it to his forehead, as if, on second thoughts, he had consulted his calmer judgment, which advised him to let it quietly sink to

rest by his side. He was clothed in the military costume of the day, to wit, a high, narrow hat, with a brim behind, as well as before, but carefully cut off from the sides, for fear of obstructing the hearing—a brass plate, like a chimney-sweeper's, was nailed on the front—and a thing similar to a bottle-brush was erected on its apex. His coat was woefully deficient of cloth in the skirts; but the tailor, as if to make amends, had added at least double the necessary quantity to the sleeves, which his lower extremities, clad in white shorts and long black gaiters, partly resembled the legs of a goose, on escaping from a foul, muddy ditch.

“Sergeant Hinde!” said his Commander.

“Here, sir,” replied the second in authority.

“Are the men all right, Sergeant Hinde?”

“All right, sir,” was the answer.

“All put up, Sergeant Hinde?”

“All put up, sir,” he responded.

“Glass of wine, Sergeant Hinde?—Capital fellow that Sergeant Hinde,” added the Captain, in a low tone, to his next neighbour—“glass of wine, Sergeant?”

“Thank your honour;” and down went the contents of the glass where the wine-merchant doubtless intended it should have gone. The serjeant placed the glass on the side-board, and was moving towards the door: but he was much mistaken if he thought to have escaped so easily.

“Hinde — Serjeant Hinde !” said his chief, puffing and blowing in the abortive endeavour to light his cigar, which had not approached the candle at which he essayed to kindle it by at least six inches. “Hinde, I say !”

“Yes, sir,” answered the serjeant.

“Are the men put up, Serjeant Hinde?”

“All put up, sir.”

“That’s well—capital fellow that serjeant—” he observed again, dropping his voice to a most mysterious pitch; “but are they *well* put up, Hinde?”

“All very well put up, sir.”

“Are they safe, Hinde?”

“No mistake, sir,” said the active non-commissioned officer, producing a key large enough to have fitted the lock of Temple-Bar gate.

“Well done, Hinde,” approvingly remarked his senior. “Where have you got them?”

“In a barn, sir,” answered the factotum.

“How many are left, Hinde?”

“One hundred and eighty four at watch setting, sir.”

“The devil! Why, where are the rest?” exclaimed the Captain, again waxing wroth.

“Can’t say, sir—I counted two hundred

and five, when we marched this morning ; but it isn't possible to find them out here, sir."

"What's to be done, Hinde?" enquired the bewildered commandant.

"Can't say, exactly, sir ; though I've a notion they've taken a fancy to the cavalry, because as how they heard they got more pay."

"Then, why the devil didn't you tell them *we* were cavalry too?" roared forth the conscientious Captain, at the loudest pitch of his voice.

"So I did, sir ; and took my oath on it ; but they would'nt have it ;" replied the serjeant.

"Damn 'em," apostrophised the officer. Hinde, you may go—you may go. Damned stupid fellow that Serjeant of mine," soliloquised the gentleman in red, as his fellow traveller

left the room;—but, instantly starting up, as though he had forgotten to ask some important question, he rushed to the door, and loudly called the serjeant to return.

“Serjeant Hinde,” hiccuped the Captain, as the stiff figure of his satellite stood erect before him, “I forgot to ask you a question—how?—damn it, I forget what it was—Oh! ah! I recollect. Serjeant Hinde, I say, how are the men put up?”

“Very well, sir,” was the answer.

“Are they all put up, Serjeant Hinde?”

“All put up, sir.”

“Are they all right, Serjeant Hinde?”

“All right, sir.”

“Where are they, Serjeant Hinde?”

“In the barn, sir.”

“Oh!—Ah!—I recollect—I forgot—you said barn—yes—one hundred and eighty-

four missing at watch-setting — eh? Wasn't that it?"

"One hundred and eighty-four *present* at watch-setting, sir," replied the serjeant, not one muscle of whose countenance betrayed his consciousness of his Captain's absurdity.

"Oh!---ah!---true!" said the other, again attempting to light his cigar; "one hundred and eighty-four present at watch-setting---that's it, Hinde?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"All drunk, Hinde?" enquired the Captain, with a most ludicrous attempt to look sober, but which he decidedly failed in achieving.

"Not all, sir."

"Damn them---there, Hinde, you may go--- Serjeant Hinde, you may go---but, I say---are you quite sure they 're all safe, Hinde?"

"Quite sure, sir."

“Very well. March on, in the morning, and I’ll overtake you ; but mind you don’t let any of them cut---recollect that.”

“Trust to me, sir, when I once get ’em clear of the town,” rejoined the serjeant : and, making a second salam, he retired from the august presence of his sapient leader.

“I’ll only take one more tumbler, gentlemen,” slowly drawled out our new acquaintance, “and then to bed.” But the gallant officer had a most unexceptionable mode of condensing a dozen glasses into one. First the decoction was too weak, accordingly a little brandy was added ; then it was too strong, and in went more water ; presently it wanted sugar, that evil was remedied, yet only for a brief period, for, in a few minutes more, the additions and improvements were again resorted to, till, at the expiration of another hour, two jugs of hot water had

been emptied. The bottle was capable of holding a quart measure of any liquid you might be pleased to pour into it; yet the "one tumbler more" remained as full as ever.

"An officer wishes to speak to the Colonel," exclaimed a waiter, entering the apartment.

"Beg him to walk up," replied the person alluded to---and straightway stalked in my old acquaintance, the pale-faced Cornet.

As my red-headed friend at Steven's had affirmed, so it turned out, that the regiment against which he bore such deadly hatred was on the march to the same place, and intended for the same destination as our own. But the wary old Colonel, having a shrewd suspicion that probably, for a day or so, it would be unavoidable having his men and horses in billets, had taken the precaution of sending a party, together with an officer, two days' march

in advance ; in the hope of forestalling the accommodation that might otherwise be appropriated to later arrivals.

I was, of course, delighted to renew our acquaintance ; and, after the officer with the pallid visage had appeased his appetite, and somewhat slaked his thirst—which first operation was more easily achieved than the second--- I gave him an account of my meeting the subject of his last practical joke in London : and from him I learnt that the victim in question, having made some particularly free, and not very guarded, remarks in allusion to the regiment, but which were not of sufficient consequence to sanction any public notice being taken of them, they determined to retort in another manner. Accordingly, every engine was put in motion to quench the flame in his breast which had been ignited on Saint Patrick's

night ; and at length he promised once more to dine at the mess. As usual, he drank hard and deep ; and, when perfectly insensible, they conveyed him in a hackney coach to the place whence the mail started, and where they had engaged an itinerant plasterer to take a cast of his face. Tightly they held him down—the liquid paste was poured over his countenance—two bits of cane, as is always done in such cases, were thrust up his nostrils, and another into his mouth to prevent suffocation, and all progressed well, till the sound of the guard's horn was heard preparatory to a start.

“By Jasus !” exclaimed the Baronet, “lets chuck him into the mail.”

“Bravo ! in with him, face and all—but stop,” said the systematic practical Cornet ; “first, take his boots off, that will prevent his getting out should he awake ; and let's empty

his pockets to avoid his buying his discharge." And accordingly, as was voted, so was it performed; and in a few seconds the unconscious civilian was progressing towards the scene of his already related adventures.

"But," said the Cornet, having finished his account, "who is that infantry officer opposite, making such inordinately hideous faces—surely he can't mean to insult me?"

"Insult you!" answered I, "nonsense—don't you see the man is dead drunk, or next thing to it? He's not even thinking of you."

"Perhaps not," replied the Cornet—and the conversation turned on some other topic. Yet every now and then I observed the new comer eyeing the gentleman in red, as if meditating the most feasible method for bringing into play his unquenchable desire for practical jokes.

"Are the men all right, Sergeant Hinde?"

shouted the Captain, half waking from a very disturbed and unrefreshing sleep. "All put up, eh?" and, turning his body round as if seeking for some one to reply, he lost his balance and his chair at the same moment, and slept soundly where the waiter had formerly retreated to perform a surgical operation on his own face, some hours previous.

"Now," quoth the Cornet, "I'll repay your civility, my friend; but I'll be more generous than yourself, for your *looks* shall be rewarded by *deeds*."

"Bring a quantity of mustard;" said he of the pallid countenance to the domestic who answered his summons; "and send the waiter to me, whom this gentleman treated so badly," he added,—having learnt the story during his enquiries regarding our prostrate guest.

"Coming directly, sir;" replied the servant,

and away he went ; and in his place soon appeared the scarified mortal with a huge black patch between his eyes, somewhat resembling the dark space between two muddy looking carriage lamps in a foggy night.

“ Did you want me, sir ? ” enquired the sufferer.

“ Yes, my man, come here—Is not that the gentleman who treated you so badly this afternoon ? ” enquired the Cornet, pointing to the prostrate hero.

“ ’Deed is it, sir,” he answered, giving the unconscious body a considerable—but as he thought unobserved—kick in the ribs ; “ ’deed is it, sir ; and a burning shame, too, to treat a body in that ere way.”

“ So, it is, my man, so it is, a rascally shame ! ” condoled the dragoon ; “ but why don’t you have your revenge ? ”

“How can I, sir?” asked the waiter; while the grin of hatred which he cast on his prostrate foe betokened a sufficient aptitude of comprehension as to the mode, had he felt confident no one would have interrupted him.

“Leave that to me,” replied the accommodating officer, “I’ll help you, my man—but listen—don’t you call this Inn the ‘Golden Fleece?’ ”

“To be sure, we do, sir. And ar’nt the animal’s self, gold collar, hoofs, and all, hanged up for the sign?”

“Very well then, get a ladder and take the sign down.”

“Lord! sir, master ’d turn me off in no time.”

“Nonsense, man; nonsense,” interrupted the persevering soldier. “Get the sign down, and I’ll hang up another in place of it.”

“Bless me!” responded the napkin carrier, “you could’nt get none at this ere time of night, Sir—Lord love ye, sir!”

“Pshaw! I’ve got one already—here he is, stupid.”

“What! this un?” enquired the other,—again insinuating the toes of his high-lows into the lion’s ribs,—“I’ll have it down in two shakes, sir.” And, to prove good his words, he speedily produced the wooden ram which for years had remained on the same spot suspended by the waist, a prominent feature in the principal street of Deal.

“Bring a table-cloth,” cried the Cornet—and a table-cloth was brought—and as speedily was the unconscious mortal enveloped in its folds—his head, arms, and legs, only remaining exposed to view.

“Off with his boots,” shouted the operator,

waxing most energetic as the performance proceeded, “and now smear his hoofs with mustard—bravo ! that ’ll do—his yellow collar will go for the gold necklace ; and his cuffs—if you dip his hands in the same way you have his feet—will answer for the gilt hoofs of his fore legs. All right—now get a rope—pass it gently round his body—and, hurra for the sign-post !”

And to the sign-post accordingly we proceeded ; across which having cast the end of the rope, the gallant Captain was instantly promoted over the heads of all present, where he was left dangling. The white table-cloth in which his body was swaddled might, in the doubtful glimmer of the breaking day, have been taken—with some small allowance for imagination,—for the white fleece of the animal—and it was impossible that the legs and arms could have dangled down in better imitation of the supporters of

the quadruped, had the actor seconded our exertions to the utmost of his ability. As it was, however, he formed a goodly and substantial substitute for the old Golden Fleece; and as his carcass was well supported by the cloth, he appeared perfectly at his ease: but just as we were at the point of departing, and probably somewhat disturbed in his slumbers by his quick transition from a hot room into the open air, he sang out,—“Sergeant Hinde—I say, Hinde, is all right?”

“All’s right as the mail,” answered the Cornet, and away we departed to our several beds, leaving to any one who might think proper the disagreeable task of humbling him who, by the unanimous acclamation of his fellow mortals, had been so greatly exalted.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following morning, the wind still continuing contrary, we received an invitation, from the officers of the seventy-four, to a ball and supper on board; and, as we well knew that every person in the vicinity worth looking at was sure to be present, we gladly accepted the summons, and of course readily acquiesced in their desire that our band might be sent in order to contribute their quota to the promised hilarity,—at the same time it was intimated that the guests would assemble at an early hour, in consequence of the annoyances too often

experienced by ancient ladies returning home late at night from marine assemblies.

Six o'clock was the time fixed on for the embarkation of the "soldier scrapers," as our band was denominated by the sailors; and, accordingly at six o'clock, they appeared on the beach, armed with books and instruments to the teeth, ready to exert their utmost, in the hope of charming the monsters of the deep, as they had so frequently done the clod-hoppers of the earth. All they waited for was the boats; which presently were seen to shove off from the ship, and, in a few seconds, reached the shore.

But, alas! how short-sighted is man, and how difficult is it to fathom the secret passions of the human heart, when the countenance is made to bear a far different expression; and little did the gallant captain of the noble vessel imagine for an instant that by any arrangement

of his, suggested through a desire of pleasing every person, there was *one* bosom, and that *one* in his own ship, whose mind, racked by envy, hatred, and jealousy, meditated a deep and summary vengeance; and this agonized mind ruffled the bosom of the ship's band-master.

This melodious individual was the Orpheus round whom clustered eight or ten aspirants, when not otherwise engaged in their professional occupations; and, more by tacit acquiescence than by actual permission, the man of quavers had dignified himself with the additional appellation of band-master, in consequence whereof, the meaner musicians voted themselves into a band, and obtained permission from the first lieutenant to make as much noise as they pleased, under the head of "practice," whenever the captain was ashore.

It may therefore be surmised with what horror and rage the leader of these artists gathered the information that a ball was about to be given on board, and a soldier band actually coming to furnish the music, while *his* band, the band for whose advancement he had nearly blown himself into a consumption, that band which, though *he* said it who ought *not* to say it, but yet *would* say it, was second to none on earth or water,—that band, his own band, was not even ordered to muster, much less desired to furnish music for the dancing.

Small minds can feel annoyances at trifles, and pass from one petty grievance to another, with as much facility as their possessors can change a garment; but the mind of a great man, once possessed with the conviction of having suffered overwhelming and galling injustice, will brood over the recollection of the

injury, to the exclusion of all other intrusions on his notice.

Thus was it with the naval man of cat-gut ; the more he pondered, the more acrimonious became his detestation of the unconscious earthly performers, and, at length, diving down some half a mile below the surface of the deep, till he reached a spot which he was pleased to designate his cabin, he ruminated over the means of gratifying his revenge, and, at the same time, over a can of three-water grog, until he fancied he had digested the pith of the one, and was certain he had swallowed the contents of the other.

Smiling and elated with the prognostic of anticipated good cheer, the Hussars deposited each the instrument whereon he delighted to practise his science in one or other of the two boats that awaited their reception ; and all hav-

ing been arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, the soldiers were stowed away, and all were ready for the voyage.

“Shove off,” shouted a weather beaten tar, with a quid of tobacco in his cheek, about the size of the ball on the top of St. Paul’s,—“Shove off,”—and shoved off accordingly they were.

Should any of my readers be conversant with the localities of the spot where the Hussars were destined to exhibit themselves to so little advantage, they cannot but remember the formation of the beach, which, having been washed by divers currents and under currents, the precise nature of which I leave to others for more elaborate explanation,—presented an appearance of three high banks rising one above the other ; consequently, when standing on the edge of the highest on a calm day, and although

probably there was scarcely sufficient water to cover your ankle, yet take one step farther, and you were deep enough in all conscience: so was it with our unfortunate band, for, at the instant the stentorian voice proclaimed the mandate to “shove off,” there was not half sufficient water to float the boats, the ensuing moment, however, brought them more than they bargained for.

“My dickens! Mr. Sailor!” exclaimed a spruce cockney, whose province it was to exhibit on the octave, and who, with a laudable desire of adding to his personal beauty, had screwed his stock so tight that he found it utterly impossible to shut his eyes,—“My dickens! how vet it is, my—”

“Oh, Lord!” cried out the band-master, “how the ship leaks.”

“Leaks?” cried a third, “why, here’s all

the music up to forty-three, a swimming like ducks in a horse pond."

"We shall sink, we shall drown!" yelled forth an awful chorus of despair; and, as if unwilling to countenance a doubt on the veracity of the prophecy, both boats separating from their contents, quietly seated themselves some ten feet under water.

To the spectators, the scene was highly ludicrous, but to the performers any thing but amusing; yet, as they were scarcely a boat's length from dry land, there was very little danger, compared to the consternation.

"Save, oh, save me!" roared the kettle-drummer, extending his arms towards the instrument from which he derived his appellation; but the instrument seemed vividly to remember the manifold and unmerciful beatings it had received from the hands of its sinking proprietor,

in the palmy days gone by, and, as if determined to leave the wretch to his fate, struck straight out to sea.

Various were the shrieks, yells, and maddening shouts, that ascended to upper air, issuing from the lungs of about thirty fiddlers, each of whom fancied his death inevitable. Instruments and music books, of all sorts and sizes, floated about; while here and there a chaco, looking for its master, or a pair of boots and spurs, sticking up to heaven, intimating the agility of the wearer by standing on his head under water, added something to the scene.

Meanwhile the sailors, having fulfilled the compact entered into between their own bandmaster and themselves, set to work most energetically to prevent the last act of the farce turning into the first of a tragedy, which they easily accomplished by kicking and shoving the

floundering soldiers a couple of yards towards the shore, where they were readily landed by others there stationed to receive them. But the gentleman in the tight stock provided himself with by far the best position of any of his comrades; for, on finding the boat sinking, and not having any very lively faith in his own powers of swimming, he sprang on the broad of a huge, herculean pair of shoulders, the property of the helmsman, with as much ease and coolness as if vaulting into his saddle in the riding-school; and clasping his arms tight round the sailor's neck, he was borne to the beach somewhat in the style of Leporello at the Surrey Theatre, who, during the storm in which Don Juan is shipwrecked, swims ashore on the back of a dolphin. The whole of the live stock at last stood safely on the beach, and the assembled spectators indulged in what the soldiers con-

sidered a very unmeaning and ridiculous roar of laughter.

It is not however to be supposed that the two boats' crews had all the fun to themselves. On the contrary the floating musician—or rather the dry floating one—had, during the whole of the process, stationed himself in conjunction with an immense telescope, by which he was enabled to derive the greatest imaginable delight at witnessing the spectacle; the performance of which evidently imparted to his wounded mind a restorative of most balmy influence. But again, alas, how short sighted is man! for, as was afterwards exemplified, though the excited optician imagined he had seen the termination of the affair,—he had yet to learn that such termination had not ended his sufferings.

“What are those boats about on the beach there, Mr. Russell?” exclaimed the Captain,

who for some time had been pacing the quarter-deck, to the officer of the watch.

“Something wrong, sir, evidently;” was the answer, “they all seem in confusion.”

“No wonder,” shouted the skipper; “by heavens they’re sinking! there they go, Mr. Russell—there they go—gone, by the hookey—they’re swamped!” And the enraged commander, finding words ineffectual to convey his fury, stood staring at his officers as if waiting for some explanation; and for a considerable time he might have waited, without gaining any satisfactory elucidation of what appeared to him a most unaccountable and lubberly affair, had he not caught a glimpse of his band-master’s visage, as that gentleman was threading his way quietly from his post of observation towards the aperture leading to his own particular boudoir before mentioned.

“Here you, band-master or idler, or whatever you call yourself,” shouted the Captain. “Come here, sir—what the devil were you grinning at this moment, you rascal, when the boats were capsized with the Hussar band on board, eh?”

“Me, sir?” asked the little fiddler—his fright producing a far more effectual shake on his natural voice than all his art could extract from his hautboy—“Me, sir? Not me, sir.”

“Yes, sir; you, sir;” replied the Captain; “None of your cursed excuses, sir: I suppose you were infernally glad at seeing the soldiers go down, for fear they should ruin you and your cracked penny trumpets. I’ll stake my life there’s some rascality in this business. But, my dear Colonel,” he continued, turning to our chief, who had been on board since the morning at his own particular request, relative to some intended arrangements, “I can’t say how sorry

I am your people should have suffered in this rascally manner. I hope to God none of them are drowned, for, if there are, I'll do my best to hang every mother's son of the two boats' crews. But we'll soon know the worst; and, as the company won't begin to arrive for the next hour, I'll find out the history of this affair or I'm mistaken.—Here, marine."

"Sir?" answered the jolly on sentry.

"Fire a shot for those lubbers to come on board—" and accordingly the musket was discharged.

"Take the glass, Mr. Russell, and tell me what they're doing," continued the Captain.

The Lieutenant did as directed; "the boats have been sunk close to the beach, sir; and the men are now hauling them up. The plugs must have been taken out on purpose, the instant they cast off, sir."

“No doubt of it, Mr. Russell; no doubt of it. Let, all hands be piped on deck; and desire the boatswain to rig the grating. I’ll teach them to play practical jokes with me, by the hookey!” and away he strutted in an awful rage, which our Colonel in vain endeavoured to appease.

In due time the boats were seen approaching the ship; and presently the whole of the culprits were paraded before their excited chief.

“What’s the meaning of all this, you infernal lubbers?” he exclaimed. “What excuse can any of you make for your conduct? answer—here you, Wilson, you—what have you to say, sir? In the name of heaven, sir, how came those boats to swamp?”

“Sure, your Honour, I don’t know no more nor on infant,” commenced Mr. Wilson with a look of innocent astonishment which might have satisfied any methodistical old lady of his entire

ignorance of the matter—"I can't by no possibility comprehend, sir."

"Oh, you can't! can't you?" replied the skipper. "Then, if you can't comprehend the cause of *that*, I'll give you something of which you can comprehend both cause and effect—tie him up; and, by the hookey, lads, you shall each have two dozen round. I'll see if you can comprehend that, men,—I'll show you that your practical jokes wont do here."

"No bad lesson this for the pale-faced Cornet," thought the Colonel; but the pale-faced Cornet was not there to profit by the example.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wilson, seeming not quite satisfied that the Captain was in joke; and yet at the same time, not greatly relishing the vein in which he had thought fit to betray his pleasantry; continued the operation of divesting

himself of his garments, in a very methodical, yet dilatory, manner.

“Make haste, sir, make haste,” exclaimed the Captain, “not going to stand here all day, by the hookey. Flog every son of you in the boats, before I pipe down, unless you give up the author of this premeditated outrage; come, sir, quick.”

Mr. Wilson, probably, had never heard that there was but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; but he had now proved, to his cost, that it only required a quarter of an hour to pass from the ridiculous to the sublime; and I never recollect meeting with any gentleman, under his circumstances, who stood a better chance of enjoying practical illustration, than was the case with Mr. Wilson at that moment.

“Is all ready there?” shouted the Captain impatiently.

"All ready, sir," was the reply.

"Then, go on," responded the chief; and in a very fair way of going on they were—when a voice, shaking as if it came from the mouth of an old man with the palsy, cried "s—to—p—"

"Who's that?" demanded the Captain, astonished at the audacity of the meaasure. But he had not to enquire twice; for immediately a short thin figure approached, walking on his knees, in imitation, I conclude, of the gentleman who fought so valiantly at Chevy Chase; but, unlike that said gentleman, his head was bare and his hands clasped together, the fingers of which being pointed to the skies, his appearance bespoke little of the chivalrous feelings of the hero who so gallantly contended on his stumps.

"Oh! Captain Hewson, Captain Hewson," he chimed out in most piteous assents, "it was

me, sir—it was me sir, that did it all, sir; and, if you'll let them off, sir, I'll never do so no more."

"What means this nonsense?" exclaimed the Commander. "Quick, sir, tell the whole, or, I'll have you up to the grating in no time," and forthwith the repentant musician unbosomed his case, showed how his small soul was racked by jealousy—pointed out the strenuous but unavailing conflicts his desire for revenge waged against his knowledge of justice—loudly spoke of what were the feelings of his band when they heard they were not to play on *their* instruments, and most piteously depicted what his sufferings would be if the boatswain played on him with his peculiar instrument. And so absurd a figure did the small man cut, between his fright, position, and costume, that, although the Captain did all in his power to prevent it,

he was unable to controul a smile finding a place on his countenance.

This was the happy moment our Colonel seized for taking him aside for a few seconds, and strongly pleading in behalf of the sailors; while the skipper, who was a thoroughly good and humane man, was probably only too glad of an opportunity offering by which he could manage to avoid punishing without relaxing discipline.

“I’ll tell you what it is, lads,” said Captain Hewson; “in my opinion, you’ve been guilty of a very flagrant and very unjustifiable act; and have, moreover, proved yourselves incompetent for manning the boats, since you either cannot, or will not, go the short distance I sent you without swamping. Now, I tell you fairly, by the hookey, had I only consulted my own feelings, I’d have flogged every man who had

art or part in the business; but, the Colonel here—the Colonel of the regiment which you have so grossly insulted, has so earnestly intreated me to pardon you that I have consented to forgo the corporal punishment, but I'll find some other way of amusing you. As for *you*," he continued, looking down upon the kneeling sinner, "as for *you*, you petty elf, who have chosen to employ your own mouth-piece in creating as much discord as you ever produced from a wooden one, I'll find something to amuse you likewise:—'till further orders," added the skipper, "let this musical youth clean the cook's coppers, and wait on the young gentlemen—pipe down."

The preparations for the fête now progressed rapidly, and another *dry* band having been sent by the commanding officer of an Infantry regiment, all went well, and every one seemed in

good humour. Bulkheads were knocked down—half a dozen cabins made into one—huge thirty-two pound carronades were, with the aid of shawls, flags, and the carpenter, transformed into ottomans—the companion found itself metamorphosed into a broad stair-case, supported on each side by gorgeous balustrades : and the gangway more resembled the crowded hall of some splendid mansion, on a gala night, than the admitted mode of ingress to a man of war ; while the innumerable boats having “ set down,” quietly dropped astern, there patiently to await the order for “ coming up.”

It was certainly a splendid affair—Captain Hewson, and his officers had spared neither trouble nor expense ; and the entertained and entertainers seemed equally gratified with each other. - The quantities of lamps and lights of all descriptions, which decorated the gallant

ship, made her appearance splendid from an immense distance ; while, on the smaller craft around, she threw darkness far off, showing all with the distinctness almost of day.

The least frequented part of the ship certainly was not that which was appropriated to the supper, but there was one figure, I observed, that appeared, disappeared, and re-appeared again and again, with such an evident desire to make himself conversant with each dish, with which the table was garnished, that I was induced to watch him more narrowly.

This personage was no less a being than the Captain of marines belonging to the ship ; and truly he was as strange a looking animal as any one could have desired to behold, even by paying for. As far as colour was concerned, no difference whatever was discernible between his coat and his countenance ; and had it not been

for the narrow black strap, round his throat, cutting off the communication, the two might have been supposed to be one. His head was enormous—his ears larger—and his hands the largest of all; while his short, fat legs, stuck into his feet, resembled a couple of rolls of butter, standing upright in two of Pratt's most capacious portmanteaus. The body of the warrior had been made to match, yet it appeared, on close observation, that, from the frequent attacks he made on the various exhilarating liquids which stood invitingly arrayed before him, there was somewhat more influential in his libations than the mere gratification of pouring down such tremendous quantities of potent liquid, for, invariably on each return to the occupation, his eye turned with a soft, melancholy, expression towards the dancers he had left; and, filling up his goblet, he would heave

a ponderous sigh, and again, as if instilled with new courage, he rushed back to the scene he had quitted. What could it be that so moved the apparently immoveable frame with such facility? My curiosity was excited, and I determined to sit where I was, and at his next appearance endeavour to draw him into conversation.

I had hardly formed my resolve when, for about the tenth time, the stout gentleman returned; he now appeared worse than ever; and, taking up a bottle of iced punch, emptied nearly one half into his tumbler, then, striking his hand upon the table, he murmured, "By heavens, I will," and off ran the contents of the glass, where the contents of the nine others had preceded it.

"A most delightful ball," I ventured to exclaim, addressing the marine officer.

"Sir?" said he, as if, until then, wholly unaware of any person, save himself, having been present.

"A most delightful ball, sir," I replied. "We must all be greatly indebted to the kindness of Captain Hewson and the officers who have taken so much trouble for our amusement."

"Oh! don't mention it, sir—don't mention it," answered the Captain: "we never consider anything a trouble which can in the slightest way conduce to the amusement of the ladies. And 'fore George,' sir, there is one—I mean, sir, there are some—that is, there are many, of the most beautiful creatures now on board the ship that it has ever been the good luck of mortal to behold—beautiful, sir, beautiful."

"Oh, undoubtedly many. But whom do you think the most so, may I ask?"

"Little doubt about that, sir," was the response; "'fore George she 's a deity."

“Ah!” I exclaimed, “I should like to see this lady; who is she, pray?”

“Like to see her, sir? why, have you not discovered which is the most beautiful creature here to-night? Good Lord! sir, you must be as blind as a marline-spike; but beg pardon, sir,—beg pardon—allow me to take one glass of iced punch with you, and I shall be most happy in pointing out the divinity—and, ’fore George, ’tis my intention to dance with her.”

The rhinoceros going to dance! I should have considered it nearly as safe for an elephant to perform gymnastics on a floor of silver paper, without perforating it, as for the jolly marine to put his threat in execution, without seriously damaging the planks of the ship; but recollecting, as the facetious gentleman has it, that I was only a passenger, I determined to witness the exhibition.

The punch was soon finished—and, arm in arm, we joined the dancers; and, following the direction of the captain's eyes, I beheld them settle with intense admiration on the slight figure of a very pretty girl, extremely young, and with a profusion of ringlets hanging down her back in long clustering curls, like the sea nymphs of yore; or, as the pale-faced cornet was pleased to express himself some four hours later, more like the tail of a cart horse on a wet day.

Nevertheless, she was very pretty, and had already perforated a hole in the soul of the fat warrior, sufficiently large to preclude the possibility of his ever repairing the damage.

“There she is, sir,—there she is,” half-whispered my friend, clutching my arm between his fin and his ribs, with a squeeze like that of a vice—“there she is, sir.”

“Very well,” I replied, releasing my mutilated limb, “I see her; why don’t you go and dance with her, as you said you would?”

“So I will,” was the answer; “but there’s one little objection to it.”

“What’s that?” I enquired.

“I don’t know her,” half simpered, half sobbed, the amorous swain.

“Why the devil don’t you go up and introduce yourself to her?” I asked; “surely, as one of the officers giving the party, it is only what every one would expect.”

“Now, really now, my dear sir, do you think it would not look rude? ’fore George, I’ve a great mind—but no, hang it—that won’t look well—I’ll get regularly introduced.”

“Nothing easier,” was my reply; “but do you know who the lady is?”

“Never saw her figure head, in the whole

course of my existence, before," answered my acquaintance.

"No? then I'll go and find out all about her; and, since you are so very bashful," I added, laughing, "I suppose I must get some person to introduce you."

"Will you really, now? my dear, sir, how can I thank you? 'fore George, you're the kindest friend I ever met—another tumbler of punch, eh? my dear sir." And, having thus fortified ourselves, I set out on my enquiries.

I soon found the lady to be one of three sisters, daughters of a gentleman who had an extremely fine place in the neighbourhood, called Delmeshow Park; and it so happened that their only brother was in the same regiment as myself; and, moreover, had the supreme felicity of enjoying the honour of being my captain—and a very good fellow he was, had it not been

for one most egergiuous and unpardonable mistake, which his friends vainly endeavoured to set him right on—but to no purpose. The gallant gentleman would fancy himself a musician; the consequence was he had half the barracks to himself—and he was prohibited from practising within two miles of the hospital. The din and discord he created were marvellous.

I soon explained to my captain the source of the marine's hopes, fears, and wishes; and, readily entering into my plan, which promised amusement, he obtained his sister's consent, and in due form the happy hero was introduced to the object of his idolatry.

“Pleasant ball, Miss, eh?” at length ejaculated the captain, having screwed his courage up to say something,—“Find it hot, Miss?”

“Rather,” answered the lady, “but it is a delightful party.”

“Do you really think so?” exclaimed the happy gentleman; “I’m *so* glad.”

“Indeed I do,” rejoined the lively girl; “I think it the pleasantest ball I was ever at, and it becomes more and more enchanting every hour.”

“Now, you don’t say so, Miss? how delighted I am! But you said you were very hot—may I get you some refreshment, or perhaps, you will honour me by visiting the supper-table? now do, Miss, pray do.”

“With the greatest pleasure;” and Emma Morton, as much amused at the absurdity of her antique cavalier, as she was delighted at this her first ball, — allowed herself to be handed into the gun-room.

“A glass of punch, Miss?” simpered the enraptured hero; “quite cold — iced — rare luxury in the West Indies, I assure you—

always drank it cold—finest thing possible, Miss, when the nerves have been shaken over night—pray try it.”

“What a delightful thing a ship is!” exclaimed the enthusiastic girl, gazing with astonishment at the various novelties around her. “Oh, how I should like to live on board! I’m sure I could pass my life in a man of war.”

“What a fortunate crew that ship’s company would be!” replied the gentleman, insinuating as much meaning into his fat face as it was capable of expressing.

“I’m not so sure of that,” she said, laughing; “I dare say you would soon tire of me.”

“Never,” he replied, with great emphasis, “never: ’fore George, I wish I had the opportunity of trying.” And never having made so pointedly gallant a speech during the long course of his maritime existence, he was fain

to have recourse to the stimulating punch.

“You ’re extremely kind in saying so,” laughed the lady, “but should the trial ever *be* made, I rather imagine you will find my assertion correct.”

“If this is not a challenge,” communed the hero within himself, “it is something pretty considerably approaching to it,” and, determined not to lose such an opportunity, he returned to the charge.

“If you have any anxiety to solve the doubt, Miss, I fancy the opportunity must always be within your reach—nay, it is at your command, even at this instant;” and, astonished at his own daring, the warrior stopped to take breath.

“Surely,” replied the lady, “you would not encumber yourselves with me—*now* that you are only waiting for a fair wind to carry you to sea?”

“ Indeed would I, most willingly !” exclaimed the punch-loving marine.

“ Then, if that ’s the case,” she answered, “ I’ll go with the greatset pleasure.” And, straightway she endeavoured to lead her *intended* partner to the dance ; for his exhibition in that line had not, as they say at Newmarket, “ come off yet.”

Nothing, now, could exceed the delight of the stout Captain. To have cut out all the young fellows around him ; and, in spite of glittering dresses and soft speeches, to have borne off the belle of the night, was, indeed, rapture to dwell on ; but to have so perforated her susceptible heart as to have drawn forth a declaration of preference in his favour—for no less did he deem her willing acquiescence in his proposals of accompanying him—was truly a consummation which his most extravagant

dreams of felicity had never conjured up. But the Captain was a most honourable and scrupulous man; so, to avoid the possibility of after complaints, he thought it would be but right to point out the advantages and annoyances appertaining to his own particular cabin; and, having invited his fair partner to visit his abode, poor Emma, little imagining the awful havoc her innocent playfulness had already made in the poor man's brain, and naturally curious to see all that was to be seen, gladly consented.

"This, Miss," said the fat gentleman, squeezing into a small box, about three feet by nothing, "this is my berth, and I sincerely trust you like it."

"What a dear little place!" cried the lady, straining her neck to get a view of the floating sentry-box. "How I wish it was mine!"

“And yours it shall be from this instant,” responded the Captain. “But are sure, Miss, you could live in so confined a place as this is?”

“Oh, perfectly well—it’s so nicely fitted up, it’s quite a little boudoir.” On which the gallant marine perpetrated something resembling a slight pressure on the arm of his companion, but which, either from the lady’s abstraction, or some other cause, did not seem to make any impression whatever on her.

“To-morrow,” whispered the marine, when handing Emma Morton to the boat, “to-morrow I will wait upon your father.”

“Papa will be delighted to see you, I am sure,” was the almost unconscious, and wholly unmeaning, response; and the craft made for the shore, leaving the gallant Captain to build in his imagination innumerable pictures of felicity, in the front ground of which Emma

Morton was the most prominent figure, and a cottage of two stories high, on South Sea Common, generally completed the landscape in the distance.

The following morning, old Mr. Morton was seated in his arm-chair, conning over the columns of "The Times," as was his daily wont, when a servant informed him there was a gentleman in the hall anxious to see him. Now it so happened that Mr. Morton could not boast of being possessed of the most angelic temper imaginable ; neither had that quality, even such as it was, greatly improved under the affliction of the gout, with which enemy to mankind he was pretty intimately acquainted. In short, so very much the reverse was he to any thing approaching to sociability that he was permitted to indulge his *otium cum dignitate* with little or no interruption from his neighbours.

But there was one hobby to which, in common with most country gentlemen, he was greatly attached, and that was farming and breeding his own cattle---the great desideratum to attain being to clothe the ribs of all beasts in his possession with a thick layer of gross fat, so as to render them disgusting in appearance, and useless for food. On the morning of the marine officer's visit, Mr. Morton had been anxiously expecting the arrival of a noted north country grazier, whose professional opinion he was particularly anxious to possess respecting an Alderney cow, which, at great labour and expense, he had just received from that island. And, as his head was fully occupied with reflections on cows and graziers, he never for an instant doubted but that the gentleman in waiting must of course be the person he expected ; and, as the portly figure of the Captain

entered the apartment, dressed in plain clothes, of anything but recent make, there was no outward or visible sign whereby Mr. Morton could have felt justified in changing his opinion.

“Pray take a seat, sir,” said the host, in a more courteous tone than he was in the habit of addressing to persons, in his opinion, of less importance than a grazier --- “Pray, be seated.”

“Goodish beginning,” thought the Captain, squatting himself on the very edge of the chair, as if fearful of scorching his person by a too intimate connection with the resting-place.

“I’m delighted in having the opportunity of making your acquaintance, sir,” continued Mr. Morton.

“The pleasure is more than mutual on my side,” smilingly replied the stout hero, quite

overcome by the unexpected cordiality with which he was received.

“Of course, sir,” observed Mr. Morton, “you’ve seen her?”

“Oh, yes, certainly,” was the response.

“Well then, tell me now, candidly, what is your unbiassed opinion on her points?”

“On her what, sir?” And the marine, tilting his chair on his fore legs, and leaning his body forward, seemed a little puzzled.

“Her points, sir; so we always term them in Kent---but, in fact, what do you think of her?”

“Why, sir, if so prejudiced a person might be permitted to give an opinion, I should say, she was perfect.”

“What, you’ve taken a fancy to her?” laughingly remarked Mr. Morton.

“You may say that,” replied the marine, winking his larboard optic most furiously.

“And you’d like to have her, I dare say?” continued the landed proprietor.

“And no mistake either,” added the jolly, cocking his eye in a way that would have made half the omnibus cads cut their throats through envy.

“More unlikely things have come to pass before now,” said the gentleman.

“What a funny old trout!” thought the Jolly.

“But if I let you have her, where do you mean to take her?” asked Mr. Morton.

“I was thinking of South Sea Common, as a good situation,” was the answer.

“And no bad place, either,” interrupted his host; “good air—near the sea—always been accustomed to the salt breezes; but tell me, sir do you think she ’s fat enough?”

“For what?” enquired the lover, somewhat astonished.

“For all purposes to be sure,” he continued. “I’ve done what I could since I’ve had her--- and what with oilcake, mangel-wurzel, and one thing or another, I flatter myself I have at last got her flesh up.”

Had the owner of Delmershow Park made ship-biscuits, cocoa, and pursers’ dips the theme of his conversation, his visitor might have comprehended his meaning; but, for all he knew, oil-cake and mangel-wurzel were delicacies which had come into vogue since the by-gone days of his infancy; and were probably the food upon which young ladies of the present moment were accustomed to be nourished: consequently he could only bow his head, in token of full concurrence in what had been said on the subject.

“But, after all,” resumed Mr. Morton, “there is one point upon which I have not, as

yet, fully made up my mind---I'm not determined whether to breed from her or not."

"'Fore George," thought the officer, "this is the plainest spoken old gentleman I ever fell in with—but let's hear what next?"

"In fact, sir," he continued, "I've so many of them, that, after all, I think the best way is, to let her go."

"That looks like small share of prize money," cogitated the mariner, "but what's coming now?"

"However," added Mr. Morton, "if I do part with her, you shall have the refusal—I've promised you that, and shall not forget my word."

"I'm exceedingly obliged, sir," was the answer, "and shall not fail to remind you; but at what period do you think it possible you may come to a final determination on this point?"

“Why, as to that,” answered the host, “so much, you know, must depend upon her milk.”

“Her milk!” shouted his guest, “why, what in the name of heaven are you talking about?”

“What the devil *should* I be talking about?” exclaimed Mr. Morton, waxing rather wroth, and rising from his chair, “there’s nothing so wonderful in a cow’s giving milk, is there?”

“A cow!” echoed the other, and his lower jaw dropped so suddenly that, had it not lodged upon his paunch as a resting-place, it must have fallen to the ground—“a cow, sir?”

“Damn it, sir!” roared his companion, “Did you think it was a bull?”

“No, sir,” was the equally loud and angry retort, “I thought it was your daughter—”

“My daughter!” and now it was the old gentleman’s turn to be astonished.

“Yes, sir, your daughter, and, not five minutes

ago, you promised, if you ever parted with her, I should have the happiness of possessing her."

"That was the *cow*, sir!" shouted Mr. Morton, half distracted.

"Don't talk to me, sir, of cows," exclaimed the Captain, "I've been grossly insulted, and 'fore George,' sir, you shall repent of it—your daughter first makes advances to me—says you will be delighted to see me—I call—you commence the business at once—promise me the refusal of her—and wind up all by wanting to sell me a cow! Damn your cow, sir, what has a Captain of marines to do with a cow? 'Fore George,' I'll not stand it."

"No more will I, sir," screamed the passionate old gentleman. "What do you want with my daughter, sir?"

"Marry her, to be sure—what should I want with her?"

“In the name of the foul fiend, who are you, sir?” asked the cow’s proprietor.

“My name, sir, is Captain Theophilus Burslem, an officer of His Britannic Majesty’s Royal Marines, *per mare per terram*, sir; and not the sort to take an insult from any one. In short, sir, once for all—will you, or will you not give me your daughter?”

“Then, sir, once for all, I will not.”

“Nor the cow, neither?” inquired the Captain, a broad grin which he could not suppress, rising to his jolly countenance.

“No, sir, nor the cow neither,” and, pointing to the door, the owner of the mansion intimated his desire of being left alone.

Now, the jolly marine was about the last man in the universe to bear malice; and, as his visage foretold, he was much more capable of forgetting an injury than of brooding over an

imaginary insult ; and though his head was not probably so clear as to have justified his being called to the woolsack, still he had a sufficiently acute perception of the ridiculous to enjoy the absurd mistake which the mutual misunderstanding of the parties had brought about.

“ Well then,” he replied, “ If I may’nt have the cow, I’ll be magnanimous, and return good for evil. I’ll put you up to a plan by which you may save money, old gentleman.”

“ What may that be ?” said his companion, whose ears were ever open to such interesting information. “ How is that to be effected, sir ?”

“ Simply thus,” was the answer ; “ don’t you mean to give each of your daughters ten thousand pounds ?”

“ Well, and suppose I do. What’s that to you, sir ?”

“ Why, I’ll marry one, and take the cow into

the bargain for half. That will save you, five thousand, won't it, old gentleman?" and, audibly grinning at his own facetiousness, the gallant offspring of Mars and Neptune effected his departure.

I was in the act of dressing for an afternoon ride, when the agitated Captain entered my room, and quickly disburthened himself of his manifold afflictions. As may be supposed, the result had turned out exactly as, in all probability, I imagined it would have done; but no persuasion of mine could induce the gallant officer to suspect for an instant that the lady was otherwise than equally afflicted with himself; and, as I found all my arguments on that head wholly ineffectual in bringing him to his senses, I was compelled to let him take his own course.

"My dear sir," contended the Captain, "did

not the lady give me every possible encouragement? And did she not decidedly accept my offer? Added to which, what object could she have had in saying her father would be delighted to see me, had she not intended me to use the opportunity of pressing my suit with the old gentleman? 'Fore George, sir, I firmly believe the poor creature is at this moment drooping away as fast as a lump of beef in a midshipman's mess—and, by Heavens, I won't stand it—no, I wont—and, what's more, I'll marry her and the cow too, if that's all, as sure as my name's Theophilus Burslem :—will you help me?"

Of course I readily expressed my willingness to aid the love-sick youth to the utmost of my abilities. But, after having started many plans, the whole of which we were compelled to relinquish, owing to some radical objection, I

bethought me of the fertile genius of the pale-faced Cornet who, with the gallant Captain's consent, was speedily summoned to the conference.

Of all the wild, mischief-loving mortals whom it has been my lot to encounter during my career, and truly they are not a few, I never met so thorough and enthusiastic a devotee to all kinds, modes, and manners of practical jokes, as the aforesaid pale-faced Cornet. The place, the time, and the person on whom the trick was to be played were to him matters of the most perfect indifference, excepting so far as they contributed towards the completion of his plot. And I firmly believe, had an opportunity offered for exhibiting his peculiar talent upon the Commander-in-chief himself, let the consequences have been what they might, the temptation would have proved too strong for

resistance. Full six-and-thirty hours, or more, had elapsed since his last performance at "the Golden Fleece;" and, consequently, he was resting ingloriously on his arms, when my summons roused him from his unwelcome state of repose.

Our plans were soon arranged, and the fertile genius of the Cornet hitting upon expedients which would obviate each obstacle that opposed itself, we felt as though our project had more than half succeeded already. The following night was fixed for the consummation; and the captain, having promised to dine with us at an early hour, departed for his ship, where he arrived under somewhat different circumstances to those he had, in imagination, been dwelling on some hours previously.

"Austin," said the pale-faced Cornet, when the other party had retired, "I don't quite

understand this business. Our fat friend who has just vacated, seems fully determined to have it that the girl is in love with him whether or no—if she *is*, may the lord have mercy on her taste — if the contrary, may some one have mercy on us, for we shall get into a pretty enormous row. Come, tell us all you know, and then we'll judge what had best be done."

"I don't believe," was my answer, "that the lady cares two straws about him; it is only the egregious vanity of the old man, together with construing common politeness into professed admiration, that has put so absurd a notion in his brain."

"Who is she?" inquired the Cornet.

"Morton's sister."

"W—h—e—w," whistled the pallid visage, "my friend with the black horse tail. Oh, she's too nice a girl to be thrown into the clutches

of such a sea-monster as Burslem; so, whether she like it or not, we'll save her."

"But the plan is already laid," I replied, "how shall we be able to change the proceedings, and yet not let the old Jolly suspect us? Remember also, he's to dine with me early morrow, and we are all three to start together."

"Oh, never mind, I'll have it all right—don't say a word to him until you see me again. I must be off now and make my arrangements; and to-morrow, before dinner, I'll put you up to the thing:" and, mounting his horse, away he started to Canterbury, with as little delay as if the Archbishop was there waiting to crown him.

Punctual to promise, at the appointed time the pale-faced Cornet made his appearance preparatory to our joining the marine officer at dinner. And his account of his proceedings

since last we met, proved his activity in the cause.

“Here I am, Austin,” he exclaimed, throwing himself, half convulsed with laughter, on the sofa. “I’ve got him a bride, though not the one he calculates on. It’s the best joke, by far, I’ve had a hand in for many a day. But attend, old fellow, and I’ll enlighten your mind on the matter; you know I bolted off for Canterbury yesterday, as hard as the grey mare could pelt. Well, I knew there was a fair going on there, so the moment I arrived, I borrowed some clothes of Wright, at ‘the Fountain,’ and off I started for Wombwell’s Menagerie, and no sooner did I reach it than, playing on a fiddle on the platform to attract visitors, I found the very fellow I wanted.”

“Who was he?” I inquired.

“Who should you think?” was his answer, “but a young bear—terrible pleasant fellow—

danced, fiddled, and scratched himself all at the same time. So up I went, and, after lots of bargaining and chaff with the owner, I bought Bruin for a five-pound note—you shall be the marine's bride, my pippin, thought I; so, forthwith I purchased a couple of loaves of sugar for him to play with on his journey—tumbled him into a yellow—and here he is."

"The devil he is—where?" I enquired, not being quite so fond of such a companion as my friend appeared to be.

"Oh, he's quiet enough, I warrant. I put him in your bed."

"My bed!" I exclaimed, "the brute will destroy every thing."

"Not a bit of it," was his cool reply. "I know the ways of these animals well enough, so, to keep him quiet, I put half a dozen pounds of honey to roost with him."

Pleasant information : but what was the good of making any objection, now the mischief was done ; so I quietly let the pale-faced gentleman proceed.

“The moment I got the lady in here, all safe and sound, away I went on board, where, having found our friend, I pointed out the necessity of his writing a note, informing the object of his affection of the plan he intended to pursue, and begging her to acquiesce in his wishes :—of course he wrote, and I undertook to get the letter delivered, and here it is—as complicated an affair as my grandmother’s sampler. But no matter, away I went to own my room, penned an answer in a feigned hand, and he firmly believes Emma Morton intends to be off with him to-night. Now the plan to follow is this : you and I will have our horses held in some bye-lane near the Park wall, in case of accidents, but

this must be unknown to him. All three of us must drive to the lodge, or near it, in the chaise and four, in which the veteran thinks he is to carry off his bride. One of my servants shall have the bear near the spot, dressed in some sort of a white petticoat, and, the moment we three leave the carriage to reconnoitre, he shall shove the bear in and make the brute sit up in one corner; your servant must put on a woman's dress, and we'll make old Burslem fancy it's the lady. Off we'll all start for the chaise—bundle the amorous youth into it, and away he'll go to to be married, ha! ha! ha!" and the Cornet laughed as though he had had fifty thousand a year left him.

"Excellent, by Jove," was my answer, and, every thing being prepared, we adjourned to the inn to dinner.

Nothing could possibly exceed the high

spirits in which my guest made his appearance. His conversation was an endless tissue of anecdote, having gallantry for the theme of each story ; and those who had not met him before, thought him the most extraordinary old gentleman they had ever been acquainted with. About ten o'clock we left the table, and, all three entering the chaise, we drove towards Delmershow Park.

“ We had better alight here,” said the Cornet, as we pulled up a short distance from the Lodge gate. “ It wont do to drive close up, we'll leave the chaise here, meanwhile we must proceed to reconnoitre the premises. Come along, but, hollo ! my dear Captain,” he exclaimed, addressing the marine, “ where are your slippers ? Surely you're not going to creak round the gravel walks in these infernal boots—why, my dear sir, their noise would be enough to

wake a sleeping army—come, off with them.”

“But what am I to do?” answered the perplexed Lothario. “I’ve not got anything else with me.”

“Can’t be helped, now,” replied the Cornet. “You should have thought of all those sorts of things before; but off with them—there’s no time to waste—and what the devil can it matter to a young fellow like you standing in his stockings for half an hour?”

“Oh, no, true,” was the reponse, “it can’t much signify;” and the amphibious mortal was divested of his boots, and away he went barefooted in the direction of the house. There was much pretended caution observed by the Cornet, and many a low whistle uttered, and then the old gentleman was made to lie on his stomach with his ear to the ground, in order to catch any sound of approaching footsteps—all was

perfectly still, and the night extremely dark.

“What’s that?” suddenly exclaimed the Cornet, as something white passed within half a dozen yards of us. “What’s that?”

“That’s her,” I replied, “and see she’s making to the lodge, where the Captain’s note appointed the meeting.”

“Oh, lord! let us follow,” cried the prostrate marine. “Emma, oh, Emma!” and, puffing and blowing, he commenced his journey—the stones and gravel cutting his hoofs most painfully, and the pace at which we travelled baffling his utmost exertions to keep up.

“Here, Austin,” whispered the pale-faced mischief-maker, take this pistol, double round the old fellow’s rear, and have a slap at him—it will so flurry his nerves as to prevent his examining the lady—ha! ha! ha!” so, taking the weapon I dodged off to my right, and, favoured

by the darkness of the night, I was soon following the hero at a few yards' distance.

"Hallo, stop there, you sir!" I exclaimed in a feigned voice, "Stop, you rascal."

A heavy, grunt, and renewed exertions to escape, were the only results.

"Stop," I again cried, "or by heavens I'll shoot you," and immediately, letting fly my charge of blank cartridge at him, I slipped away and soon headed the would-be benedict. On reaching the chaise, all was as well as we could desire. Bruin, in a white petticoat, bonnet, and shawl, was quietly seated in one corner of the carriage, engaged in his favourite occupation of sucking honey—the old gentleman's boots filled to the brim with ditch water reposed beneath—the door stood invitingly open, and all we wanted was the presence of the bridegroom.

"'Fore George, gentleman," puffed forth the

poor dupe, in short sentences ; his wind nearly broken, and his weight reduced three stone by his labours, “ I shall never sur—vive this—damned fel---low—fired---two shots at me—ball whiz---zed by---my---ear—where’s the—lady—Eh ? Is---all---right ? ”

“ Oh, yes, all’s right---come, bundle in---here they are after us again,” cried the Cornet, in a feigned accent of alarm. “ Are you all right ? ” And, without further ceremony, we hustled the ancient warrior into the chaise, and slamming the door to, desired the boys to drive like fury.

“ I shall never be able to repay you for your kindness,” sighed the marine, looking out of the window, as the yellow moved on.

“ No, never ; ” replied the Cornet, and off we ran to our horses.

“ The wind’s chopped round, sir, and the

transports sail in ten minutes," said my servant, immediately on my return to my quarters. "There's not a moment to lose, sir, everything's on board, and the boat's waiting." So, in obedience to the directions of my trusty domestic, I was soon standing on the deck of the vessel.

"What's that gun firing for?" I inquired of one of the sailors near me.

"A signal from the seventy-four, sir, I suppose they've got some of their people ashore; howsomever, if they're not sharp, she wont wait for them. Ah! look, sir, there's the signal—up anchor and away—so he 's lost his passage whoever he is."

And so he did. Alas! poor Burslem. And, having thus eased my mind of the share I had in adding to his misfortunes, I swallowed a glass of hot brandy and water with my musical Captain, and turned in for the night.

CHAPTER V.

PRIOR to my departure from Deal, I received a letter from Mr. Jephson, in which he said that not one syllable had been made public respecting my unfortunate duel. My two drafts had been presented for payment the very day succeeding the occurrence, but not a question had been asked by the person holding them. He added that Lady Distowe had returned to Selby; and, from some unknown cause, the rioting and disorderly conduct of the visitors had in a great measure subsided. This information was of course highly gratifying to myself; yet, I could

have wished the blood of the ruffian to have rested on the hands of his companions, rather than on mine ; but, as that was not possible, I had only to look forward to some future period when I might disclose the entire transaction, and keep the secret, which I was compelled to hide like a criminal, no longer locked within my bosom.

I was perusing the kind-hearted little lawyer's letter for the third or fourth time, while laying on the deck, when my ruminations were interrupted by the approach of Captain Morton.

"I say, Austin," he commenced ; "are you musical ?"

"Yes," I replied, "in as much as I delight in hearing music both vocal and instrumental ; but I do not presume to pass myself off for a connoisseur, neither am I a practical adept in the joyous science."

“Don’t you play any instrument?” was the next inquiry.

“None whatever,” I answered, whereby I evidently descended full ten degrees in my Captain’s estimation.

“What a very great pleasure you deprive yourself of!” said the amateur—“If you’d only commence, I’m sure you’d succeed. By-the-by have you ever seen my new violoncello? It’s splendid, actually splendid — I’ve got it on board.”

“What, here?” I exclaimed, “how, on earth, do you mean to carry such a ponderous thing as that about with you? I should have thought you would have found baggage enough, without hampering yourself with a great fiddle.”

“So you think, I dare say,” he replied; “every one to his taste. Besides, I’d rather have my violoncello, than half the things you carry under

the denomination of comforts and necessities ; but, to guard against any annoyance in the way of joke or quizzing, from the Colonel and the others, I have had the case made to resemble a badger box more than any thing else ; and, being painted black, like my other chests, no one would guess its contents. At present it is stowed away some where in the hold, but the moment we land, my boy, I'll give you a treat." And, thinking he had promised me the greatest favour imaginable, Captain Morton left me to resume my meditations.

"Are you aware, sir," said the master of the transport to me in a low, confidential tone, while smoking my cigar on deck in the twilight, "are, you aware, sir, there's a dead body on board?"

"Not I, indeed ;" was the reply, somewhat startled by so unexpected a question, "has one of the horses cast himself?"

“No, no—nothing of the sort; but, if you will step this way, I’ll inform you. You must know, sir,” continued the skipper; “when I was at dinner to-day, up comes my mate with his hair standing like the points of a sea egg. ‘Captain,’ says he, ‘do you know we’ve got a stiff’un on board?’ You don’t say so? I replied. Is it a’ soldier? ‘Blest, if I knows what it is,’ says he, ‘for he’s boxed.’ They have’nt been long fitting him, at all events, says I—but where is he? ‘Ah, there’s the rub,’ replied the mate; ‘I’m blowed if he ar’nt crept into the hold along with the baggage.’ But are you quite sure, Sam, there’s no mistake? ‘Sorrow a mistake this time, Captain. He’s got a brass plate and all reg’lar—and there’s all the men like to go mad about it—had’nt I better heave him over?’ Wait a bit, Sam, says I, I’ll look at him first.—Now, sir,

perhaps you're not aware that all sailors are the most superstitious beings existing; and these fellows of mine, as is the case in the other transports, not being men-of-war's men, but only hired for the voyage by the ship-owners, I have not half the controul over them that the officers of the navy exercise with regard to their crews. And if these men discover,—as I'm afraid, by what the mate has stated, they already have done,—that there's a dead body aboard,—they'll either insist on consigning it to the deep, or we shall be in a state of complete mutiny. But how the coffin got here I cannot imagine, unless it was brought from the hospital as part of the Doctor's baggage by mistake, last night, in the dark."

"It is a very strange circumstance, I replied.

"But what do you purpose doing?"

"Ah, there's the rub, sir; it wont answer me

fighting with my crew; neither do I want to make a shindy about the business. I therefore think it will be just as well not to mention the affair to any of the officers, but, if you'll accompany me to the hold when its dark, I'll desire the mate to bring a lantern, and then we'll judge for ourselves." To all which I willingly agreed, and we then separated for the time.

It may be here as well to inform my readers that the master of the transport, like the members of his crew, did not belong to the navy; but, having been at sea all his life, was ready and competent to accept any employment connected with his profession that offered. The gentleman in question was considered an excellent sailor. But if his men were tainted with superstitious fooleries, their commander was deeply imbued with a thorough belief in every description of supernatural horror and stories of marvellous and appalling apparitions.

"Is he still there, Sam?" enquired the Captain, as his trembling mate appeared, lantern in hand, before him.

"Yes, sir, he is; but I thinks he's going."

"Going! where, Sam?"

"Oh, Lord, how should I know, sir," and the mate took a hurried glance over his shoulder, as if fearful the corpse might overhear any disrespectful insinuations regarding its place of abode; "I can't tell, sir, only I thought I saw it move."

"Lord, how horrible!" cried the Captain, "let's each take a nipper." And in accordance with the good man's injunction, a 'nipper' we took; and, being thus armed, we proceeded in quest of the body.

"I say, Sam," cried the Captain, "what are you doing behind there?"

"Only pulling up my shoe, sir."

“Well, we’ll wait till you’ve done, Sam.”

“Oh, don’t mind me sir,” was the reply, “I can soon catch you.”

“Yes, but you’d better go first, Sam, you have got the lantern, you know.”

This was decidedly a clencher, and, as poor Sam could not muster a negative to so palpable a truth, he was reluctantly obliged to advance.

“Dont you think, Sir,” said the mate, “if we lower the lantern into the hold, we shall be able to see as well as if we went down ourselves?”

“You’re quite right, Sam,” answered the skipper,—lower away,—and down went the lantern with a tackle affixed to it, until it reached the stowage where the troops’ baggage was deposited; and there, sure enough, as much to my wonder, as the skipper’s horror, lay a long, black coffin, and, as the mate had truly stated, with a brass plate on the lid.

“Lord, Sir,” exclaimed the master of the vessel, “is’nt that awful—Lord, what a horrible sinner I have been! Sam, go down and see what’s on the coffin plate.” But Sam evinced no inclination whatever to move.

“Lower the lamp, Sam,”—said I, “a little more—there now—bring it right over the plate—there—that will do—steady,” and the light shining directly on it, I plainly decyphered

HENRY JACKSON,

F. 1813.”

“Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!” exclaimed the skipper writhing with anguish, “Lord have mercy upon me, that’s my name—oh, Sam, Sam, I’m done—I feel my timbers all going to pieces. Don’t it say so, Sam? Oh Lord, ‘F. 1813.’ That means, foundered in 1813. My time’s up. I’ve sprung a leak, Sam, and shall go down head foremost. Oh Lord, oh my—!!!”

“But I always thought,” said I, interrupting the flow of grief which he was venting, “I always imagined that if you acted with promptness on these occasions, the joke rebounded on the old gentleman himself.—Now, were I in your place, before the alarm spreads, I’d sew a couple of heavy shot at ‘Henry Jackson’s’ feet, and let him find his own way elsewhere.”

“A most excellent thought, Sir,” replied the skipper, partly recalled to his senses ; and, having given the necessary orders, I soon after heard a sullen plunge, and the Captain’s Duplicate descended to the bottom.

“It is a very extraordinary thing,” said Morton, a few days afterwards, when marching up the country from Oporto, “but I can’t find my violoncello any where ; my servant swears

he put it on board, but I suppose that's only a cloak for his negligence in having left it behind. It is most dreadfully provoking, after all the trouble I took about it."

"Had it any direction?" I enquired.

"Nothing," answered Morton, "except a brass plate with the maker's name on it, and the year in which it was made."

"Do you remember what the engraving was?" I asked.

"Perfectly," replied the Captain; "the same name as our skipper's of the transport—and a most excellent maker he is. It only arrived two days before we sailed from Deal, and I forgot to put my own address on it; but as there was 'Henry Jackson, fecit 1813,' on the top of the box, I thought no one could have taken it in mistake. The fact is," said Morton, "between

you and me, my servant never put it on board."

"Perhaps not," I replied. And, being seized with a violent fit of coughing, I judged it advisable to fall to the rear.

CHAPTER VI.

I THINK it was on the second of June, I found myself lounging listlessly on my horse in rear of my squadron, about noon of as hot a day as could well be enjoyed. We were then marching between Toro and Morales, the Esla having been crossed on the 31st of the preceding month—the entire army advancing on Valladolid. Totally unaccustomed to the searching influence of the sun reflecting its burning rays on the white, arid sands of Spain, and thinking what a delightful thing an exhilarating draught of any iced beverage would be at that moment,

I had recourse to the Spaniards' never failing Panacea under all circumstances, and on all occasions—a cigar. "Divine Havannah," as has oft been said and sung, what volumes might be written in thy praise—how wonderful, various, and miraculous, are the powers with which thy votaries invest thee! In the heat of the summer-day the Spaniard smokes for coolness—in the chill of winter he flies to the cigar for warmth—in the hour of affliction the sufferer acknowledges thy soothing influence—and in the moment of festivity, how greatly does thy fragrant prescence enhance the charm of the meeting!

But to return to my narrative. As I have already said, I was sitting somewhat lazily on my horse, when the word was passed to "form squadrons," and "close to the front."

"There 's something in the wind now,"

thought I, and my conjecture was tolerably correct; for, on gaining a view of the plain beyond, my curiosity was satisfied, at beholding a very strong body of the enemy's heavy cavalry waiting to receive us. This was the first time I had been introduced to our adversaries in close contact, and a very formidable looking assemblage of gentlemen to behold—they were about one thousand strong, and wore huge brass helmets bound round with leopard skin, and having a long tail hanging down each man's back like the hinder appendage to a Life Guards-man's horse — immense boots drawn over grey cloth overalls — blue jackets with yellow facings, and large gauntleted gloves, completed their costume; but their swords, compared to those of our men, were formidable indeed; the blades being about one third longer.

Not much time was afforded us for our observations ; for, the moment the nature of the ground permitted, our regiment was ordered to deploy, and, as soon as the line was completed, away we dashed in as good order, and at as gallant a pace, as could have been executed on Hounslow Heath.

“Sound a trot !” exclaimed the chief, and accordingly a trot was sounded.

“Canter,” and the officiating musician communicated the command through his trumpet, and, when within about forty yards of the French, the soul inspiring “charge” was given ; and, plunging their rowels into the flanks of the noble steeds, onward rushed the brigade, with an impetuosity the enemy were unable to withstand.

Nevertheless, they were any thing rather than disposed to yield an inch of the ground ;

and, with most determined bravery, they resisted to the utmost the strenuous endeavours of our men to force them from the field: yet, notwithstanding the numerous instances of gallantry performed by the enemy in that combat, they were at length compelled to retire. At one period the dragoons of both countries were so intermixed, fighting hand to hand, that, had it not been for the difference of the head dress, it would have required some degree of discrimination to have known the one party from the other.

The heavy dragoons were men of immense stature; and the huge beards and luxuriant mustachoes, which they all appeared to cultivate with great care, gave them as ferocious an aspect as could well be imagined; but, generally speaking, their horses were wretched animals, being for the most part small, and greatly in-

ferior to the execution of the duties imposed upon them.

I recollect having gone the following day to look at some of these animals, which had been captured; they were all huddled together in a small spot, on the right bank of the Douro, and which had been formerly designated as a garden; they were in most miserable condition, the bones actually protruding through the skin, and not an ounce of flesh on the whole of their carcasses put together; while the dreadful sore backs, having been unattended to, and exposed to the glaring heat of the sun, and the torture inflicted by myriads of flies and mosquitoes, presented a picture truly revolting. What became of these miserable horses, I have not any knowledge; they were wholly useless to us, and, after that morning, I never saw them again.

As the combat of Morales was my first exhibition as a practical warrior, so was it very nearly my last ; and, more through my good fortune than good judgment, the termination to my career was postponed. The order to charge had hardly passed the lips of our commander, when I found myself surrounded by a dense mass of friends and foes, all employed to the very utmost of their abilities in abbreviating the existence of each other. And, acting upon the principle of the old and somewhat musty saying, which enjoins us "when at Rome, to do as they do at Rome," I bethought me that, under existing circumstances, any thing would be preferable to inactivity. Accordingly I put in practice what the radicals and agitators are pleased to call passive resistance, that is, I set to work with the best intentions possible, with the aid of one of Andrew's best tempered

swords, to discover the exact quality and thickness of the brass helmets which adorned the heads of the hairy-visaged Gauls.

While thus amusing myself, a ponderous Frenchman, doubtless conceiving it a pity that I should be put to so much trouble on account of his friends, generously determined on my quietus. There could have been no mistake as to his intentions, for, standing up in his stirrups to his extreme length, he uttered some half a dozen "*sacres*," at the highest pitch of his voice, and, flourishing his immense sword round his head, he dug the spurs in his horse's sides, and rushed open-mouthed at his victim.

Wholly unconscious of the honour intended me, I was at that instant hammering away at one of the before-mentioned brass helmets, the property of a trumpeter who, much to his apparent annoyance, was cased within it; when

one of my own troop, who was close to me, cried out—"Look to your right, Mr. Austin;" and I had hardly time to turn in my saddle, ere the infuriated dragoon was within a horse's length of me,—his sword in the air ready to descend upon my devoted head; and, to all appearance, my fate was inevitable. But, just as I expected the weapon to cleave my skull, and before I could bring up my guard, my adversary's horse stumbled, and, vainly endeavouring to recover himself, pitched headlong on the field; while the colossal rider, jerked out of the saddle, fell with his exposed neck immediately on the point of my sword; and, in less than a few seconds from the time when the hussar gave me the warning, my opponent was lying on the ground far beyond all chance of benefit from human assistance.

So sudden had been the attack, and so

miraculous the result, that for a time I felt perfectly bewildered; and, as the enemy were now losing ground, closely followed by the brigade, I had an opportunity of contemplating my prostrate foe.

He was apparently about five-and-twenty years of age, and, as I have before stated, was a large, robust man, and considerably above six feet high. His two huge bullion epaulets proclaimed him an officer; and the legion of honour, together with three other decorations suspended at his breast, bespoke him accustomed to danger, and well acquainted with many a field of glory.

While gazing on his manly countenance, now pallid with the sickly hue of death, a feeling tantamount to a full consciousness of my own insignificance crept over me. And when I reflected that, through pure accident, under the

guidance of an ever-watchful Providence, the firmly knit frame now lying inanimate, and which, but a few minutes before, moved and acted under all the confidence of acknowledged superiority—and that that frame, which had stood the test of fire and ball in many a hard fought field, and whose daring gallantry had heaped upon him the distinguishing marks of his sovereign's favour, and which emblems of his heroic achievements still hung upon the breast of the dead—it was far from satisfactory to think that the bosom which, but a brief time previously, had glowed under the excitement of all the noblest attributes of man,—should be there lying at my feet cold and insensible as the clod of earth on which his body rested. And the sudden transition from the excitement in which his past moments existed, to the dreary nothingness of the tomb,

to have been caused by the hand of an inexperienced boy who, amid the whirl of conflicting sensations, which must find temporary access to every one on witnessing his first field of battle, could scarcely account for his adversary's death !

Contemplating the features of the dead invariably impresses the beholder with a sensation of awe ; and wonderful is it that the constitution of our natures should be such as to induce us fearlessly to oppose ourselves to the animate body, when in possession of its full faculties and power of acting, while we shrink under an unknown influence against coming in contact with the same frame, when all power of thought or action has departed.

And how much more appalling is it when we stand by the side of one whom, in the full vigour of strength and manhood, our own hand

has cast down to a level with the sod of turf on which he lays extended. Such, then, was my case—a mere boy bending over the corpse of what, but a short time gone by, had been a gallant and experienced warrior; while I, a stripling, for the second time—but under how far different circumstances—felt the painful consciousness of having deprived a fellow-creature of existence.

In a far from enviable mood, I turned my horse's head to depart, and was preparing to gallop after my companions, when a small locket, suspended round the neck of the body, attracted my attention; and, hoping it might afford some clue by which I might possibly become, at a future day, acquainted with the history of my fallen foe, I sprang from the saddle, and, having possessed myself of the trinket, I was compelled to leave all that re-

mained of the gallant soldier, amid the corpses of his companions, on the bloody field of Morales.

The body of cavalry, which we had thus routed, proved to be the enemy's rear guard; and so completely were they overthrown that, losing all symptoms of order, and regardless of subordination, they at length turned and fled with as much swiftness as their wretched, jaded horses could carry them. For several miles the pursuit continued; and, exclusive of the enemy's loss in killed and wounded, our hussars brought in three hundred prisoners. The day on which this brilliant affair occurred was a disastrous one for the French; for, on the same evening at Castronuno, a guerilla band under Don Julian Sanchez, surprised and captured a strong cavalry picquet.

After the day's work, I was glad enough to

lay down by my tired steed; and, finding it impossible to procure any thing to eat, I wisely resolved on sleep; and never, when on the finest bed of down, have I enjoyed such delicious repose as on that night, amid the high waving grass, which grew most luxuriantly on the banks of the river. Fortunately, for me my musical captain was a better forager than my inexperienced self; for, after having indulged in about two hours' oblivion, I was roused from my pastoral couch to partake of a huge melon, a bundle of onions, and half a loaf of Spanish bread, which my worthy companion exhibited in triumph; and, with two or three cigars, which I found at the bottom of my sabretash, we enjoyed a most excellent repast.

The next morning at day-break, we were ordered to ford the river some distance above the fine old stone bridge; one arch of which,

having been blown up, and utterly destroyed by the enemy, of course, presented an effectual barrier to our progress; but the infantry, by means of ladders, safely descended on one side, and re-ascended on the other; the water at this season of the year being so shallow as not to offer an impediment.

Having effected the passage, we moved slowly on, marching through Toro, and, in due time, arrived at our destined halting-place for the night. And here I had an opportunity of examining the locket which I took from the neck of my opponent the previous day; it was a small gold case, on one side containing a lock of beautifully silken, jet black hair, while on the other were engraved the letters L. M. The long dark tress was evidently a female's, and given, probably, but a few months before, as a pledge of faith and affection, bestowed with all

the warmth and fervour of woman's love : and where was now the object of her adoration—the being for whose safety and return perchance she daily, nay, perhaps hourly, offered up her supplications : alas ! the next tidings she could receive would for ever annihilate all her ideal prospects of future happiness ; and her young heart, probably budding with the first emotions of love, would fall, blighted and withered, long ere the flower reach its meridian beauty !

There was nothing particularly romantic or extraordinary in the history of the French officer ; but, such as it is, and, owing to the singular chance which made me acquainted with it, it may not be amiss if I here repeat the narrative, as it was told to me.

Long after the period of our encounter, in fact, so long subsequent to it as the year 1827, I chanced to make one of the many thousand

spectators who assembled to witness the splendid review of the French troops, at St. Omer, in the department of Pas de Calais; and one day, while riding down the extended lines of cavalry, I recognised my old acquaintances of Morales—there shone the burnished brass helmets glittering in the sun, the lower part surrounded with the spotted leopard skin—the grey overalls surmounted by the ponderous jack-boot—the large gauntleted gloves—the single-breasted, yellow faced jacket—and last, though not least, the enormous long swords, which appeared, if any thing, longer than ever. Not a change could I discover in their costume, excepting that the eagle which, in Spain, bore a prominent part in the ornamented front plate of the head-piece, had made way for some less objectionable crest; but, save in that instance, so exactly similar were the troops before me

to those I remembered in the skirmish, that it appeared the interval which had elapsed had existed but in imagination.

How different was the case in my old régiment! Not a vestige of their Peninsular dress remained, and not one officer could they number among their ranks who had witnessed the engagement between the two corps.

During the evolutions of the morning, I hovered round my old acquaintances, and could not fail to be struck with the wonderful difference between the horses in their possession in 1813 and those I now saw; and I mentally doubted whether, in the event of a second collision, we might not find it a somewhat more difficult task to impress them with a conviction of our superiority.

When the prescribed manœuvres for the day had been executed, and the regiment was on the

march to its cantonments, I rode up to an officer whose numerous orders and white moustache showed him to be no novice in the art of war.

The French are proverbially polite ; neither in this instance did I discover any exception to the general rule, for with the greatest urbanity my advances were met, and my remarks listened to and answered with much courtesy. At length after complimenting him greatly on the appearance of his regiment—for it so turned out that it was the commandant himself whom I had accosted—I ventured to remark on the evident improvement they had achieved in being mounted on the description of horse they then possessed, to what they were when I met them last.

“Certainly,” was the reply, “we have for a few years past taken much trouble in that re-

spect, but as we have been tolerably effective for some period, I conclude you allude to a distant date."

"Not very recent, certainly," I answered, smiling, "for the last time, and in fact the only time, I ever had the honour of meeting your regiment, was in the Peninsula."

"Indeed," exclaimed the Colonel, "may I enquire where? though to be sure," added he with the genuine vanity of a Frenchman, "we were always to be found when there was any thing doing, and sometimes without the trouble of being sought for. But to what occasion do you most particularly allude, sir?"

"Why," replied I, "the combat I advert to took place with the rear guard of your army and our Hussar brigade, between the towns of Toro and Morales."

"Sacre !" instantly rejoined the old dragoon,

“that was a sharp affair, sir ; but I remember your men numbered, in proportion, at the rate of three to one of ours ; and therefore it was but judicious on our parts to retire, which you will remember we effected in our accustomed soldier-like manner.”

Now, what the old Frenchman's ideas of three to one, and retiring in a soldier-like manner, may have been must to me for ever remain a mystery ; for, on the occasion of which we were conversing, the numbers of the enemy, according to the statements of the prisoners, amounted, on comparison with our returns, to about three to two ; and, touching the soldier-like way in which they retired, I must confess that the latter part of the conflict savoured very strongly of the old saying, respecting a certain gentleman, who shall be nameless, catching the hindmost ; but, of course, I did not conceive the present a favoura-

ble, or at all propitious, moment for expressing those opinions, the more so as I was anxious to extract some information, which I doubted not my companion was fully capable of bestowing; therefore, suppressing my own sentiments on the occasion, I listened for a further description of the conflict.

“Ah,” continued the Colonel, “I have often lamented the occurrences of that day, not so much on account of the general affair, which you will allow, sir,” slightly bowing to me—“was rather in our favour; but principally owing to the loss I sustained in the death of my best and bosom friend, who fell gloriously at the head of his squadron. But,” continued he, shrugging his shoulders; “what can the bravery of a handful of men avail when opposed to overwhelming numbers? He fell, sir, surrounded by his enemies who had sunk under the resist-

less sway of his sabre, but, exhausted from numberless wounds, and yet dealing death to those around, he at length dropped from the saddle pierced with innumerable gashes. Had it been practicable, I would have returned to the field, and sought the spot where I had seen my gallant friend expire, not only with the hope of being able to have performed the last sad offices to his remains, but likewise to possess myself of a trinket which he wore about his person, and which I had the previous day faithfully promised to convey to the hands of her who bestowed it, should the possessor cease to be numbered among the living. But to carry my wishes into execution was impracticable, for, between that period and the little after affair at Vittoria, I assure you, we had plenty of employment to occupy our time."

"Then," said I interrupting my informant,

“I conclude you never gained any further intelligence respecting the body of your friend?”

“Yes;” was his answer, “but not one word of the locket; for, after a considerable period, I learnt from some of our men who had remained in the hands of the English, that they sought and obtained permission to bury the bodies of their comrades on the same evening; and though many have acknowledged being present at the time; and though all agreed in having found his body, before the camp followers had time to strip it; and even though they owned to his purse having been untouched; yet not a syllable have I ever been able to discover respecting the trinket; which leads me to suppose they must have been mistaken in the corpse, and yet that seems hardly probable, for all the men were well conversant with his appearance; and moreover each of them bearing testimony to his identity—

still to me it appears most strange, for confident am I that on that day he wore, as indeed he always did, the identical trinket of which I speak; yet how to account for its absence I know not, for had those disgusting harpies who always hover round a field of battle, or indeed had any of our own men, or those of the enemy, actuated by a base, mercenary feeling, plundered the dead,—it is not to be imagined they would have neglected to appropriate to themselves his watch, purse, and many other articles which must, in their eyes, have far outweighed in value the trifle which I was so anxious to regain. But all my enquiries were fruitless, and every exertion I made ended in disappointment; and, now so many years have elapsed, I despair of obtaining farther information.”

“ Pardon me, sir,” was my reply, “ but, unless I greatly mistake, I think I may be of service

to you in elucidating the enigma. Have you any objection to describe the locket?"

"None, in the world, sir. It was a small gold trinket. A lock of a lady's hair was enclosed on one side and the initials of the same person on the other."

"And those initials were—?" I enquired with some eagerness.

"L. M." answered the Colonel drily, as if he thought my curiosity had already reached the verge of politeness; but, heedless of his changed manner, I drew the trinket from my pocket, and holding it up before him simply enquired—
"Is this it?"

It would be difficult to describe the astonishment of the old soldier, on so suddenly and unexpectedly being put in possession of what, for many a long year, he had resigned all hopes of recovering. But, as we had now arrived at the

destination of the regiment, and the men had been dismissed to their stables, their chief invited me to accompany him to his quarters, where we might at leisure talk over the circumstances which, from different motives, so greatly interested us both.

In relating my share of the adventure, I communicated all the details as they occurred, merely omitting to put my auditor in possession of the knowledge of the part which it had been my fate to enact in the tragedy; for I had good reason to suppose that, had my share in his friend's dissolution come to the old gentleman's ear, he would have considered it indispensably necessary to demand a trial of skill with me in single combat; and, even supposing me to be so far fortunate as to come off victorious, I should then have been turned over to the second-in-command, and so on in rotation, until

every member of this, by no means small, corps—for there were ten troops and four officers to each—had done me the supreme satisfaction of either probing at me with their swords, or making a target of me for their pistols; which being, in my opinion, quite an unnecessary exposure of my person, I thought it would be adviseable, were I to keep that interesting piece of information to myself.

The story, as communicated by the old Colonel, was this :—

“ Louis de Vallençin was the son of the younger branch of one of the most distinguished among the families of the old noblesse, who suffered so conspicuously during the French Revolution ; and, when a mere boy, found himself, together with a numerous draught of other conscripts, on the march to join the victorious

banners of the Consul, whose fame had already spread to the most distant points where civilization was acknowledged. Naturally of an ardent and daring temperament, he found little to regret in quitting a home where the infliction of numberless privations, consequent upon the reduced resources of his family, was made doubly burdensome by the invariable accompaniment of complaint and useless invective against the authors of their present poverty and misery; while before him was laid open the broad pathway to glory which so many of the best blood in France were then treading in humble guise, but among whom he fondly surmised he should one day rise to that elevation and ascendancy which the rank of his forefathers and his noble birth justified him in anticipating. Neither was he wrong in his prognostics of the future; for in that army, where

courage and talent were sure of meeting their reward, it was not possible that those qualities, so highly esteemed by its leader, should lose aught of their intrinsic value when aided by sound judgment, improved through the advantages of a superior education. Step by step the young soldier advanced in the good opinion of the Emperor ; and it was but the foregoing year he had returned after the battles of Vincovo and Malo-Yarastovetz, in the ranks of the miserable remnant of that once magnificent and gorgeous array which, unfurling its banners on the field of Friedland, marked its advance to Moscow by devastation and outrage ; and stamped each footstep of its panic-struck return with starvation, carnage, and defeat.

“ He had shared in the horrors of the retreat on Verreia, and narrowly escaped with the vanquished remains of what had *once* been the

armies of Mortier and Davoust, at Krasnoi. With Ney, he accomplished the memorable passage of the Dnieper—a more gallant exploit than which daring achievement the history of war cannot furnish. At the passage of the Beresina he had been severely wounded; and after undergoing sufferings, the description of which to any, save eye witnesses, must appear overdrawn and exaggerated, he once more returned to the fertile vallies of his own France, in sufficient time to march in quest of further perils for the aggrandisement of *that* man, for whose gratification, and for whose inordinate and rapacious ambition, Louis de Vallengin added one more to the list of those gallant souls who, evincing the most profound contempt of danger, and spurning every selfish consideration, willingly poured out their hearts' blood on the field of battle; and with their latest breath,

showing their devotion to the cause, shouted their faint, expiring cry, 'Vive l' Empereur.'

"And was there *not one* to watch the glorious and rapid stream of his successful career with admiration and applause, except his comrades in arms? Was there no soft and gentle bosom which, while glorying in the praises which were so frequently showered in profusion on the exploits of the youthful soldier, still felt a sickening pang of dread when pondering over the many dangers and horrors with which his perilous path was strewed, but along which he was then so gallantly running his adventurous course?

"Yes, there was one—one sweet, gentle, creature, whom from her earliest infancy he had watched over and guarded, with all the sincerity of childish affection, till, as he advanced in years, the cherished idol of his infantine admiration

became the object of his first and undivided love. His parting from this fair and gentle being, when leaving the land of his ancestors in the humble capacity of a conscript, plainly convinced him how dear her image and her welfare must ever be to his heart, even though time, distance, nay, even death itself, should separate them.

“ But a few years since, and this truly amiable being was still passing a secluded and mournful existence, near the spot, where every hamlet, shrub, and stream, were made sacred in her eyes from the recollection of associations with the dead. I know not if this once beautiful creature still exists, and the very uncertainty of my information on that point will at once exonerate me in the opinion of my readers from censure in concealing her title. Let it suffice that the initials, I have before stated as being

engraven on the trinket, were the true leading letters of her name ; and when I affirm that the poor pennyless girl—poor in all but excellence and beauty—retained the same place in the affections of the gallant soldier, when success had elevated him to rank and wealth, that she exercised over the untried heart of the humble conscript—it is not to be wondered at that the intelligence of Louis de Vallengin's death fell upon her devoted head as might a thunderbolt from Heaven, blasting for ever each prospect of happiness, and leaving nothing on this side the grave to be desired beyond a speedy summons to rejoin that being in Heaven to whom she was so shortly to have been united when on earth."

"Such, sir," continued the Colonel, in conclusion, "is the brief history of my poor friend,

and had he been spared until the termination of that disastrous campaign, his marriage, which for pecuniary reasons had been so frequently postponed, was to have taken place. As you may suppose, owing to the long and unbroken intimacy which for so many years had existed between us—I was well acquainted with the lady, and I am confident that in returning this locket to her hands, accompanied with the recital with which you have favoured me, I shall afford her a most welcome, though melancholy, recollection of the subject on which her mind for ever dwells.”

Shaking hands with the warm-hearted veteran, I bade him farewell; when, turning my horse's head towards Saint Omer, and, throwing the reins on his neck, I soon, and for ever, lost sight of my brass-headed, long-tailed acquaintances.

CHAPTER VII.

IN penning these recollections of various incidents which have chequered my existence, I cannot plead guilty of vanity in supposing myself competent to detail the history of the war; and, though some persons have entered into loud controversies on similar subjects, while acting at the time as subordinate regimental officers, —I confess that, for the life of me, I cannot conceive where and how they found either time or opportunity for making those nice observances which they have, in some instances, so minutely detailed to their wondering countrymen, after

the expiration of many a long year subsequent to the execution of manœuvres, on the utility or otherwise of which they have deemed it necessary to expatiate with a laudable desire of enlightening the uninitiated with their lucubrations.

I do not pretend to say the authors in question did not witness, and accordingly record from personal observation, the occurrences on which they so fluently descant—far from it—I doubt not, in the least, that, being possessed of a large development of the bump of observation—if such an one has been discovered—they were thereby enabled to wrangle and argue, touching the different movements that took place; and fully to explain the motives and reasons which actuated the Generals then commanding them. All I can advance on the subject is my total inability to “go and do likewise;” for, to confess the honest truth, I candidly acknowledge

my incapacity—but this I *do* know, namely, that, when British soldiers are led by such officers as those who so gloriously directed the troops during the last war, little fear need be entertained as to the result.

Basking in the halo of splendour so inseparable from the exalted rank of a full pay Lieutenant, and in which elevated sphere I then flourished, with full permission and equal opportunity of exposing my corporeal frame to the bullets of the enemy at almost every hour of the twenty-four—and having attained somewhere about that respectable age verging on seventeen, I feel bound to acknowledge that I thought much more of the ways and means of procuring food for myself and horses than I did regarding the operations of divisions, of which my own regiment formed no integral part. It was enough for me to know that our troops were led by

Wellington, and *we*—at least the younger subalterns—were inclined to believe that the strict performance of the duties in our own particular departments was considered, by our superiors in command, of far greater importance than our opinions would have been, had we interfered with what no regimental subaltern officer can possibly have a distinct and clear knowledge of.

Nevertheless, there are many well detailed accounts of the warfare of the period of which I now write; and coming from the pen of those whose opportunities of witnessing and abilities of recording the progress of that eventful epoch are so universally acknowledged, that it would be presumption on my part were I to comment on the subject.

To the works of such men I refer my readers, should any exist, who are unacquainted with the progress of the splendid achievements accom-

plished by the British arms and their allies ; but, for my part, I feel bound to continue my egotistical narration, and let those who wish it search elsewhere for more solid information.

Although I do not profess accurately to detail each movement of the contending armies, still I have a vivid recollection of the affairs in which I had the fortune to bear a part ; and a somewhat severe contusion which I received from a spent ball obtained a pretty secure place in my remembrance of the village of Hormaza, where, by effecting a flank movement, we dislodged a strong body of the enemy under General Reille ; yet, notwithstanding the vigorous charges with which we favoured our opponents, they continued to retire in excellent order and accomplished their retreat without much loss. This trifling affair occurred on the 12th, and, unlike the generality of days at that season of the year,

the weather was remarkably cold and overcast, so much so that, on our halting for the night, my musical Captain set to work and, in due time, produced a most exhilarating and copious kettle of hot punch.

Now, it so happens that I have always had a rather partial feeling towards this beverage; but when you find yourself seated round a bad fire composed of green wood, in an open field,—your teeth chattering with cold—and your limbs benumbed from the same cause—to say nothing of being without food, and in momentary expectation of being ordered into your saddle—then it is that this delicious decoction surpasses in its flavour the perfumes of the most ambrosial sweets, and in its taste—the nectar of the gods themselves. Then it is, that no man, not even excepting the president of the Temperance Society, himself, would profess the least disin-

clination to partake of the mixture—provided he could, by any possibility, obtain the option.

At all events none of the party, then present, appeared in the slightest degree to object to the punch ; neither was there any fear of its being necessary to press them to replenish their glasses, for all seemed convinced of the necessity which existed of doing honour to Captain Morton's entertainment.

There were some ten or dozen of us seated round the said kettle, and enjoying the occupation in which we were engaged with as much gusto as the scarcity of accommodation afforded, when our attention was called away from our employment by the voice of a distant sentry challenging some one, advancing towards his post, the clatter of whose horse's hoofs, was plainly audible as he trotted along the rugged road. Apparently, the answer received was

satisfactory, for, after a delay of a few seconds, the stranger was allowed to pass ; and, when similar impediments had been observed by the different guards, the officer rode up to the spot where we were seated.

“ By my faith, gentlemen, and you seem mighty comfortable,” exclaimed a voice which I had no difficulty in remembering as that of Sir Terence O’d’Armagh ; “ and, with your good permission, I should have no sovereign objection in aiding your researches into the interior of that punchy, black, gentleman ;” and, instantly dismounting, a very considerable diminution of the beverage was soon discernible.

“ Why, O’d’Armagh,” I exclaimed, recognising my friend, and making room for him round our wretched fire, “ right glad to see you ; but tell us us what you do here ? we thought your regiment was some miles to the right nearer Burgos.”

Is it Burgos, you mean?" he replied, shaking me cordially by the hand, on recognition; "sorrow a bit do I know where the regiment is, but this same Burgos is the place I started for, some hours ago; and, thanks to that spalpeen of a guide, I see no chance of ever getting there, though it was but a four mile march when we commenced it. However," he continued, "where's your Colonel? I'd a note for the Commandant of the town, explaining all about it, and, as I can't find him, bad luck to it, why, the best thing I can do is to give it to the senior officer here." And, after fumbling amid a heterogeneous mass of wonders, with which his sabertash was stored, he at length produced the epistle, which, when handed to our chief, enlightened him as to the cause of the Baronet's arrival; and, while the gallant Cornet was making up, what he termed, his lee way, by

means of frequent application to the kettle, we were put in possession of the contents of the packet.

It is a fact, I believe, well known, that, among the many thousands of defenceless women whom the presence of the French, in Spain, had struck with a deep feeling of horror, the inhabitants of the convents' and different religious houses were not the least prominent. Among others, whom the reigning panic had fully taken possession of, were the nuns of a small establishment at Briviesca, a town close to the river Oca, in which peaceful seclusion the holy damsels had, for years, enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity ; but, on hearing of the retreat of the French, they immediately forsook their home ; and, acting under the influence of terror, and ignorant what road to take in order to escape their threatened danger, they, as

nearly as possible, fell into the hands of the very people to avoid whom they had already suffered so much ; and, after two days of danger and privations, it fell to the lot of my old Norwich friends to take possession of the fair prize.

Their having escaped falling into the hands of the enemy was something approaching to the miraculous ; but to turn them adrift in quest of further adventures was impossible. It was in consequence determined to forward them, with a sufficient escort, to some place of comparative safety ; and, as the French had evacuated Burgos, and our troops at the time were garrisoning the town, it was judged expedient to send them thither ; and, as the duty required could not occupy a longer period than four hours, a subaltern's party was directed to escort them ; and, a guide having been procured, it

fell to the lot of Sir Terence to be told off for the particular duty.

In due time and order the cavalcade marched; but, either through the ignorance of the guide—the night being extremely dark—or owing to his misunderstanding the orders he had received, he was leading them direct upon their own home at Briviesca; and, had they not fortunately fallen in with us, half-an-hour's further advance would have brought them up with the enemy's rear-guard.

“And now, Colonel,” inquired the Baronet, “what's to be done? I have left my cargo of Monks, Nuns, and Friars, a few hundred yards in the rear, and have pushed on to report my arrival.”

A consultation was immediately held, and the result as speedily acted on; in furtherance of which, the Baronet, accompanied by some of

the officers, started in quest of the religious wanderers, and soon conducted them, with their escort, to our bivouac—and a singular group they were. The ladies consisted, in number, to the amount of fourteen, all habited in black—the long and graceful lace mantilla thrown across the head, and descending on each side below the knees, formed at once a most ornamental article of dress, and at the same time enabled the wearer to disclose, or conceal, the features, which ever she might feel inclined to do. Much to our disappointment, the generality of the ladies were long passed the period of life when the mantilla would have been used as an instrument for coquetry, or displayed and arranged with that studied air of negligence for which the Spanish ladies are so justly celebrated. In fact, these ancient spinsters arranged their garments with a far greater

regard to resistance against cold than as a lure for the admiration of the other sex. Yet, amid this mass of plainness, there were three señoritas who might with justice have stood forward as specimens of the beauty of their country-women. The style of feature, however, was very similar among them all. There was the clear transparent, olive complexion, slightly tinged on the cheek with that brilliant vermillion which lasts for so short a time in the countenances of the ladies of Spain; and the small feet and hands, and the delicately-turned ankle, bespoke their aristocratic descent; while the large, sparkling, eyes, flashing from under their magnificently arched eye-brows, revealed at once the land of their birth. These ladies were mounted on mules, having for saddles a wooded frame which, being placed on the well-padded back of the animal, is strapped to the beast

somewhat in the English style of girthing a horse—a broad crupper and breast-plate of ornamental worsted is then added, and a manta, of almost every colour of the rainbow, with a deep fringe of the before-named material, is thrown over the whole. Nothing then remains wanting but to stuff the bottom, back, and sides of this portable arm-chair with pillows in their white cases, as though just taken from the bed; and all is ready for the reception of the rider.

Exclusive of the fairer part of the community, we discovered, among this travelling cortege, a couple of old friars and a handsome young padré, the latter of whom must have enjoyed no sinecure; for, whether it was that the old ladies had taken such an unbounded affection for him, or whether they considered that, from seniority of age, and, perhaps, consequently

greater sanctity, they were entitled to the priority of his attention, I know not ; but I observed that, whenever he approached any of the three señoritas to offer a few words of common-place civility, the more antiquated of the party, as if by mutual consent, severally demanded his attention to adjusting so many little comforts for themselves that the poor man seemed hardly capable of deciding in which quarter to commence his difficult labours. As for the friars, they seemed to go to their task of preparing the supper, in conjunction with the servants who had accompanied them, regarded by no one, and regardless of all.

Of course we did all we possibly could to make the party comfortable, but that was no easy matter in a bivouac ; for, as we expected to march at day-break, harassing the enemy's rear, it was impossible to have sought for

shelter. We piled on more of our green wood, and offered what little the Baronet had left in the kettle for their consumption; and I never remember witnessing so decided an instance of female curiosity as on this occasion, for, on the first old *duéña* putting her lips to the glass, she made the most horrible faces, spitting out what little she had taken without the slightest demur, and, ejaculating “*Mucho malo ! mucho malo !*” handed the vessel to her next hand neighbour, who, nothing daunted by the condemnation which had been passed, essayed the trial in her turn, but with a similar result. The cup was then carried to the next, and so on, until each of the fourteen ladies had tried it: and I remarked that the last, though perfectly conversant with the thirteen previously expressed opinions, took the beverage, when offered, with as much eagerness as the first had done; but

when it came to the *padré*, he doffed his enormous shovel hat with much courtesy, and, having given the same opinion as the ladies, returned the glass—but by some accident or other, it was—empty!

Meanwhile our commandant had taken upon himself to explain the exact state in which we were then placed as regarded our proximity to the enemy, and our available means of being of any service to the ladies. The French were then in full retreat towards Frias, whither, or to what place soever they directed their course, we were to push on with all speed: as it was therefore impossible to convey the nuns back to Burgos, our Colonel proposed they should accompany us on the march the following morning; and, as we were likely to advance in the direction of Briviesca, it was probable that we would march through it; in which case our

fair charges could be placed in safety on their own thresholds, whence they had so suddenly fled in terror a few days before.

After an immense deal of talking on the part of the old ladies and the *padré*, not one syllable of which any one of our lately arrived warriors could understand, it was agreed that the Colonel's advice should be acted on. This point having been settled, the Friars and their greasy-looking assistants produced the supper, and, as it was the first meal I had seen cooked according to the Spanish system, and although, from the unavoidable absence of many requisites, I could not look upon it as a criterion of the *arte de cocina* of the country, yet, so striking was the first dish, not only to the eye, but also to the olfactory nerves, that, as it is generally alledged first impressions are the most lasting, the effect which the arrival of the

supper had on my organs of smelling will not, I imagine, be obliterated until my dying day.

A huge brass pan, which some of the party contrived to have brought with them—for most assuredly no one in our bivouac possessed such a thing—filled with pieces of chicken, and a large quantity of rice, floating in rancid oil, and, not only flavouring of garlic, but actually impregnating the whole of the surrounding atmosphere with its disgusting effluvia, was placed on the table.

When seated round this highly seasoned dish, each person produced a wooden spoon; and the frightful havoc commenced by every one selecting what part she deemed best from amid the savoury heap; and, aided by the fingers, the whole was speedily consumed. Small pieces of roast meat, similar in size to the Turkish kabobs, were then introduced;

but, like their predecessors, tainted with garlic to such a degree as to render it next to an impossibility for a stranger to the smell to remain in the same apartment. I cannot, at this distance of time, call to mind the component parts of the other delicacies; but I perfectly remember that they all, without any exception, partook of the horrible taint of oil and garlic: lemonade and chocolate, the latter as thick as paste, ended the repast. And whatever may have been my feelings towards the three young señoritas, prior to the banquet, I could not behold them afterwards without a feeling of disgust. Whether the impression imbibed by the others assimilated to my own, I cannot take upon me to declare, but, during the night, I was frequently disturbed by long-whispering conversations which, to my drowsy ear, partook partly of English, and partly of any tongue

you may please to name, under the sun. But before the gallant Baronet laid down in his cloak to rest, he was determined not to be outdone by his comrades, by a tacit acknowledgment of his ignorance of the language—he therefore approached the *padré*, with the usual nocturnal salutation of “*Buenas noches, señor,*” to which the holy man appropriately answered; but, having so well succeeded in his first attempt, Sir Terence felt loth to quit the field, after so short a sally; purposing, therefore, to use a well known complimentary Spanish phrase, signifying “may your family live a thousand years,” this brilliant son of the Emerald Isle most politely expressed his desire “that his ghost might follow the poor *padré* for that lengthened period.” At first the dark-coated gentleman evinced an inclination to take offence, but, when it was explained that the

mistake originated solely in the Baronet's slender knowledge of the language, the padre was instantly appeased ; and poor Sir Terence slunk to sleep, cursing the priest, the garlic, and all Spain.

The following morning, we were in the saddle before day-break, as usual, and, pursuing our route in the direction the Colonel had predicted, we deposited our garlic-eating friends in safety, at their own domicile, together with the padre, friars, and all the travelling appurtenances connected with the establishment ; and, on taking our final farewell, blessings and saints were so lavishly called upon in our behalf, that, had only one tenth part been sufficiently disengaged to have attended the invitation, we must have been the happiest mortals ever born, and so continued to all eternity ; but, as nothing in a tangible shape made its appearance, if I except a cup of very indifferent Biscayan wine, which

was as new as the donor was the reverse, I was not sorry when we finally parted company.

Nothing greatly varying from the usual routine of one day's march with another occurred, until the 20th of the month, when the Duke of Wellington, collecting his various divisions on the Bayas, convinced even those who did not draw their conclusions from very distant sources that it was highly probable our services might be practically and speedily required; and such the following morning proved to be the case; for, during a heavy shower of rain, we found ourselves marching in complete darkness, long before the sun had evinced the slightest intention of rising; but, as the day advanced, the heavy clouds separated and dispersed, and the parching heat, to which we had now begun to feel pretty well accustomed, once more rose on the ascendant.

The town of Vittoria, as my readers are probably aware, is situated in one of the Biscayan provinces, in an extensive plain, having part of the Pyrenees on one side, and some considerable heights on the other; while the river Zadorra runs in its front. The ground in the vicinity of the town had been cultivated, and at that time produced an abundant crop of corn; and so luxuriantly had it flourished as to afford places of concealment to our infantry, in more cases than one during the battle.

Between nine and ten o'clock, on reaching some elevated ground, we had a splendid view of the French army, which was drawn up in two lines, and fully prepared to receive us; and king Joseph himself, accompanied by a numerous and glittering staff, was plainly discernible, as, stationed on a hill, he was busily engaged in watching the position of his troops. It has

been said that, owing to the absence of some ten or twelve thousand of the enemy, under General Foy, who were detached on a separate duty, the numbers of the opposing armies were thus placed on an equality. Such may have been the case, but, if my memory does not deceive me, General Pakenham's division was likewise engaged elsewhere, the Duke having judged it necessary to employ them at a distance, some days prior to the engagement. From what I myself beheld, I should have stated the numbers of the enemy at a considerably increased ratio to our own; but, as I have before said, not having access to those sources whence alone correct information could be gathered, it is highly probable that my conjecture regarding the comparative strength of the two armies might be erroneous.

About eleven o'clock we were ordered to dis-

mount near Alabarre, while the light division immediately on our left, and drawn up in contiguous close columns, was for a short time halted. I was tightening my girths, and examining my appointments, in the expectation of being soon brought into action, when an officer of the regiment, who had joined us the preceding night, from head quarters, where he had been detached on some particular duty, gave me half-a-dozen letters, which had been handed him from the General's despatch-bag, but which he had not had a previous opportunity of delivering. A letter from those friends or relations of whose welfare and happiness we care to hear is always a welcome arrival; but, coming at such a moment as that on which I received mine, when it is impossible to examine their contents on the spot, and moreover, when it is probable that, in a few hours, we may be rendered incapable of

appreciating the value of the endearing expressions and kind wishes therein contained, and as the eye gazes on the well-known characters of the hand-writing,—the forms and features of the absent flash upon the recollection, as strongly as though their palpable figures stood before us. One letter I recognised as coming from my friendly little lawyer Jephson; and I was eagerly breaking the seal when the order to “Stand to your horses” put to flight my unseasonable reflections; and I thrust the unread epistles into my bosom.

The action was commenced by the Spaniards, in conjunction with part of the second division, somewhere near Puebla; and in a short time the conflict became general. Smoke, the thunder of the guns, the incessant sharp crack of the musket, and shouts and yells of every description soon filled the air. The heat was intolerable,

and as for ascertaining anything that was going on beyond my immediate neighbourhood, it was wholly impossible, for there not being a breath of air to disperse the thick masses of dense smoke which momentarily issued from all parts of the field, for sometime the mist was so impenetrable that with difficulty we could discern objects but a few yards' distant.

Our state of inactivity was not destined to last, for, making the best use of a sharp pair of spurs, and galloping upon a fine, spirited, chesnut horse, covered with foam and heat, an aid-de-camp of Sir James Kempt's dashed up to our Colonel, and, having communicated some order, disappeared as suddenly as he presented himself. In an instant we were in motion, but so difficult was the ascent, and so narrow the path, by which we were commanded to advance, that it was impracticable to attain the summit

but by galloping up singly, which was instantly effected; and in a short time we gained the remains of a chapel, where we found our old friends, the light division, snugly ensconced behind a bank which ran out to a considerable distance, and certainly not more than one hundred yards from the enemy; but, not much liking the proximity of such neighbours, the French soon changed their ground to the right.

The celerity and precision with which the enemy worked their guns was afterwards, certainly not at the time, a theme of conversation and applause throughout the British army; and at the village of Ariyes, when driven through the streets by the impetuous gallantry of our troops, notwithstanding the daring valour with which our brave fellows dashed after them with loud cheers and fixed bayonets, supported by part of the Hussar brigade, so determined was

the resistance offered, and so beautifully were the guns served, that, for full ten minutes, the enemy kept his ground in the struggle, amid the flashing of small arms poured upon him from both flanks and front, the loud roaring of the artillery, the whizzing of balls and bursting of shells ; till, amid the dust and smoke which was nearly sufficient to have stifled the combatants, the British, uttering a soul-inspiring cheer, desperately forced their way over the dead and gasping bodies so thickly strewn around, and the enemy was driven from the village.

With various results, my regiment was employed throughout this long and arduous day ; and the shades of evening were threatening an advance, when it was determined to strain every nerve to bring the contest to a close. We were at this time within a mile of Vittoria, and

the enemy, as if determined to make a desperate stand, formed so imposing a front as for some time to keep our troops completely in check. The artillery on both sides kept up an incessant fire; and the loss consequently sustained by each army was enormous. This state of things could not last long, and, at length, galled by the incessant fire poured into their already thinned and wavering ranks, regiment after regiment of the enemy quitted their positions, and made the best of their way towards the high road to Pamplona; these again were followed by brigades, until at length whole divisions bent their steps in the same direction. It is, however, but justice to acknowledge that what remained of the enemy's left wing retired in a steady, soldier-like manner, worthy of the veterans who composed it, and some regiments there were which did not turn their backs upon the field, while a

single round of ammunition remained in their pouches.

When the French succeeded in gaining the high road, they found it so completely choked and blocked up with baggage of all descriptions, as effectually to destroy every semblance of order in their ranks ; in fact, so great was the pressure, as brigade after brigade coming up forced those in advance forward, that every vestige of discipline was at an end ; and a scene of unparalleled confusion was the immediate consequence, added to which our light cavalry harassing their rear considerably increased the panic which had already taken hold of the greater part of the disorderly thousands.

Numbers of carriages, filled with ladies handsomely attired, and arrayed in all the colours and decorations of Parisian folly, sadly contrasted with the wagons crowded with wounded

and suffering soldiers, whose progress, as well as their own, was irretrievably impeded. Drove of animals of all sorts mingled in the throng—sheep, oxen, cows, and goats, wandered amid the scattered contents of hundreds of overturned vehicles. Every description of furniture, which use or luxury could call for, was trampled under foot by the flying host. Powder, ball, and all the munitions of war, implements of husbandry, the gorgeous decorations of palaces, the spoils from Madrid, were all passed unheeded, or impatiently cast aside, as their proximity in any way retarded the disastrous flight of the spoilers.

Guns, ammunition, musket-cartridges, gunpowder, baggage almost incalculable, together with Marshal Jourdan's baton, formed part of the spoil. But the condition of the unfortunate ladies, many of them of high rank, and whose husbands or other relatives had held office in

Joseph's Court, was pitiable in the extreme. Thinking escape more feasible if mixed with the crowd, several of these poor creatures descended from their carriages, and, in their thin and feminine apparel struggled among the hardy and the desperate, and, in spite of the extreme sufferings they must have undergone during the retreat, some were afterwards stated to have reached France, though in a condition of most complete wretchedness, bordering upon starvation and nudity.

Joseph, himself, narrowly escaped being taken, and so hotly was he chased by a squadron of Hussars that, had he not forsaken his carriage for the back of a swift horse, he must unavoidably have fallen into our hands; as it was, we took the liberty of borrowing his carriage, and an examination of its contents afforded no trifling amusement among our men.

Chest and chest packed with specie had been broken open, and their glittering contents cast unheeded on the road; and so weary and famished were the men that, except in a very few instances, the soldiers, who had been engaged since the morning, passed the tempting treasure with indifference, in their eager search after some more nutritious substance. That an immense quantity of money was stolen I willingly admit; indeed, the paucity of coin and almost total absence of minor articles of great value, which found their way to head-quarters amid quantities of stores and provisions, sufficiently prove the activity of some persons in collecting for their own immediate profit: yet to attach the blame of committing plunder solely to the troops I shall always consider as an unfair and extremely unjust accusation; and when the presence of the numerous swarms of hangers-on

who follow an army is taken into consideration (as all men, who have witnessed a field of battle after an action will attest that they are never found in such quantities as when a chance of plunder offers), I boldly avow that, excepting in a few instances, as I before stated, the blame of what has been justly stigmatized as a disgraceful proceeding might have been laid to the charge of others than the gallant troops whose distinguished bravery added, at Vittoria, one laurel more to the brows of their victorious country.

But a short time back, goaded on by the accursed spirit of democracy, now rapidly overthrowing all that was once held just and honourable, and actuated by a meanness unparalleled and before unheard of, our rulers cast to the survivors of many a hard fought battle an inadequate, yet, to the unlettered, though

honest, old soldier, a tempting, bait, which, in too many instances, induced its victim to exchange, for a paltry sum of ready money, the scanty, but formerly secure, pension, the reward of the blood which he had spilt and the wounds he had received in defence of our country, by which means a miserable parsimony was effected, and the aged pensioner deprived of his hard-earned pittance.

The French army, if indeed army it could still be called, was nobly covered by its rear-guard, which, although closely pressed by our cavalry, showed their front with an undaunted courage, whenever opportunity offered. It was nearly dark, and to attempt a farther advance on our tired and jaded horses would have been a difficult measure to accomplish. We were therefore ordered to halt, when the last retreating files of the enemy, by way of a farewell

salute, wheeled about and, levelling their carbines favoured as with a well-directed volley. And if the gentleman whose ball thought proper to lodge itself in my breast directed his piece at me individually, he had no reason whatever to accuse himself of want of proficiency as a marksman, for, no sooner had the report of the discharge met my ear than I experienced a sensation as though I had been struck in the body by some heavy substance—I grew suddenly giddy—all objects seemed to dance before me—my balance was lost in the saddle—and the next instant I was stretched unconscious on the earth.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was the third evening, as I was afterwards informed, since receiving my wound that I came to a partial return of recollection; and then so indistinct and contradictory appeared the position in which I was, and the occurrences when last in possession of my full faculties, that, oppressed with bodily pain and prostrating weakness, I again fell into a feverish and unrefreshing sleep.

When I was once more enabled to recall bygone occurrences to view, I found myself one of many occupants, in a long, high-roofed apart-

ment ; and in undisputed possession of a small straw paliass, of which description of article there were many ranged along each side and down the centre of the room.

Indeed, so closely were these uncomfortable couches placed that, with great ease, the occupants could each shake hands with his neighbour, without having occasion to change his recumbent position in the least. In fact, those who had arms to move, or tongues with sufficient strength to talk, could exchange their tangible or verbal greetings, without the slightest laborious exertion whatever.

How I became an inmate of this place was of course wholly unknown to myself ; but for what purpose I had been brought, the pain experienced—the bloody bandages with which I was supported—and my shaven and blistered head, sufficiently denoted : in short, it did not

require much observation to convince a casual observer—much less one so interested as myself—that I was in a thickly crowded hospital.

There were about seventy patients in the same ward with myself; and, to judge by the numbers that were hourly carried out—having no further occasion for the surgeon's exertions, but whose places were immediately filled by fresh occupants—it was made manifest that there were many others as much in want of attention as ourselves. Yet, among the many who crowded the hot, suffocating room, there were scarcely any of my countrymen—the patients for the most part being French. And, to do our medical department common justice, it is only right to observe that it was impossible for men to receive more attention from their friends than did the soldiers of Napoleon benefit from the kindness and exertions of the English

surgeons ; and that this *was* the case, the men themselves offered abundance of evidence, by their repeated acknowledgements of the fact.

The place in which we were deposited had evidently been a building dedicated to some magisterial meetings ; and at the extreme end, was suspended the portrait of an old don, clad in all the splendour of the ancient Spanish costume, and his features portraying a mixture of undeviating gravity and repulsive hauteur, so characteristic of the *Grandeos* of the country.

How vividly, even at this lapse of time, can I bring before me each touch of the artist's pencil as depicted on the canvass ; and what a sickening sensation of loathing creeps over me as the remembrance of the long, dread hours of suffering which I underwent, when gazing on that detested object, recurs to my recollection ! Incapable of motion—without the soothing voice

of a friend to watch over my enfeebled frame and cheer away my encreasing despondency, I have gazed on that insensible daub till my shattered frame and highly excited state of nervous debility have made it appear as if instinct with life; and a horrible idea took possession of my fancy that the large staring eyes, so undeviatingly fixed on my countenance, were the huge organs of vision pertaining to some evil fiend who anxiously and with restless impatience waited for my dissolution, in order to claim instant possession of my more lasting essence.

Never can I forget the horrors of that hospital. Worn to a mere skeleton through intense bodily suffering, my mind entirely lost its former elasticity and vigour; and so prostrated was I, both mentally as well as in frame, that often—oh, how often! when my wandering

thoughts have carried me to my once happy home, and the more recently impressed remembrance of my mother's love—I have cast the clothes above my head, and wept for very anguish as a child !

Day after day, nay almost every succeeding hour, bodies were conveyed from their beds of suffering to the grave ; and, during the period of my sojourn in that awful charnel-house, eight times was my neighbouring pallet occupied by patients, seven of whom I beheld leaving the apartment, to pass thence but to the tomb.

Neither can I forget the agony endured from the excessive heat. Every thing that ingenuity could suggest was put in practice to obtain a less infected and purer atmosphere ; but so crowded were the rooms, and so various and complicated the complaints with which the

dead and dying were infected, that the foetid air was, in itself, a sufficient cause for disseminating disease. While the myriads of flies and mosquitoes, attracted by the mass of human corruption, hastened to their disgusting banquet with little fear of opposition from their victims. During the entire four-and-twenty hours, these tormenting insects were continually buzzing and flying round the heads and faces of the wounded; and the very restlessness thus occasioned was quite enough to have worked a person enjoying good health into a high state of fever; and, consequently, how unspeakably great were the torments inflicted on the maimed and decaying objects around!

So greatly did my nervous horror of the dreaded picture gain strength that I one day requested a cloth or cover might be suspended over it; and, during the morning, I felt con-

siderable relief at the absence of my persevering tormentor. But, when darkness succeeded the light—saving a faint ray from the slight glimmer of a lamp which partially illuminated the apartment—the overwhelming and nervous sensation returned with ten-fold force. To my diseased imagination, the cloth was frequently moved, and the deeply impressed features of the portrait peered out, as though expecting the hour could not be far distant when he might seize upon his victim for ever. I was at this period as fully aware of the fallacy of such illusions, and equally impressed with a knowledge of their absurdity and variance with truth, as I now am ; yet all the arguments I attempted to use, in the hope of soothing my irritated apprehension, failed in their object. And the significant look which the head of the medical department bestowed the following morning on

the attendant surgeon, after passing my pallet, plainly betrayed the estimation in which my case was held by that officer.

I felt I was dying; and, singular to acknowledge, — so worn out and emaciated had I become that I neither experienced, nor expressed, the slightest anxiety to live,—to me the prolongation of my being was a matter of indifference; and, at that period, I might have been said to have existed but in part. Each succeeding morning brought my daily visitation and my dressings; and the impression on all seemed to be, not a wonder as to whether I might eventually recover, but considerable astonishment at my having retained life in my frame for so long a time, beyond that which, in their sagacity, they had allotted me—and I am confident those gentlemen, in the course of a day or two, would have been released from all

personal attendance on myself, had not an unlooked for piece of fortune befallen me. I must however do the medical department the justice to say that, in all cases which fell under my observation, and most particularly in my own case, it would have been impossible for more time and attention, coupled with great skill, to have been bestowed by the highest and most extravagantly fee'd members of the Faculty.

Listlessly languid, and though in some measure unconscious of passing events, I could not avoid remarking that, whenever the surgeons made their tour of the hospital, accompanied by one of the mates, bearing in his arms a huge folio, in which the names of both the dead and dying patients were inscribed, considerable displeasure was expressed at the way in which the said entries were noted.

“Why, how ’s this!” exclaimed one of the most displeased of the party, looking at the name and number appended to the head of my next hand neighbour’s pallet: “how ’s this? ‘No. 17, Jean Barque, French Old Guard;’ and here you have in your book, ‘August 18th, Jean Barque, French Old Guard, died 2, P. M.’ How ’s this, sir; what ’s the meaning of this negligence?”

“Really, sir,” replied the accused, “it is impossible for me to say. I am confident I remember inserting the man’s death, and am equally certain that such insertion could not have been made, unless the patient had actually expired.”

“But here ’s the man alive before your eyes;” responded his angry superior. “Here ’s the man, sir; how do you account for that, sir?”

"Some one must have altered the tickets, I suppose;" timidly advanced the mate. "I know of no other way of accounting for it."

"Altered the tickets, sir?" was the reply; "who on earth do you suppose would take the trouble to stay playing tricks here, if by physical possibility they could crawl out of this depôt for the sepulchre? pooh! sir, pooh! nonsense!"

"Well, sir, all I can affirm is that the man *did* die, and was buried; and if he *will* come back again, I can't help it." And the angry mate turned on his heel, as if about to depart.

"Stop, sir!" exclaimed the other; "we'll soon settle this business. My fine fellow," he added, addressing the poor remnant of what had once been one of the choicest flowers in the ranks of Napoleon's Guard, "tell me, my fine fellow, is your name Jean Barque?"

The old soldier had apparently been listening to the conversation, but evidently without understanding the purport of a sentence; and, with a fixed glassy stare, he now regarded the surgeon, while the query was addressed to him which was to solve the doubt as to his having been previously interred or not. He was a splendid specimen of those heroic bands who, considering Napoleon as little inferior to a deity, would most willingly have sacrificed home, ease, and happiness, to follow their beloved leader to the very confines of the earth. His features were manly in the extreme; and in his younger days he must have been eminently handsome; here and there, his black hair was thickly interspersed with gray, and the long dark moustache hanging over, yet without concealing, the lips of an ashy whiteness, contrasted too horribly with the hue of features,

whereon death had evidently placed his seal. Small gold rings ornamented his ears, and on the pallet lay the large grey coat in which he had received his last and mortal wound ; and, I remarked his thin emaciated hand was seldom withdrawn from grasping the three decorations which were fastened to the breast.

“ Is your name Jean Barque, my friend ? ” again enquired the surgeon, in a kind persuasive voice ; but what the answer might have been none, save the Almighty, knows ; for the scarcely audible sound which escaped the lips of the sufferer conveyed no meaning to the bystanders. It was evidently his wish to speak, and the very exertion which he made to articulate his words probably hastened the crisis, which, however, must have been near at hand. A deep sigh escaped from his bosom—his eyes gradually half closed—the lower jaw dropped

from its position—the features became fixed and rigid, and the spirit of another of Napoleon's devoted followers departed from its earthly tenement for ever.

Exclusive of the ward wherein I was placed, there were many other rooms in the house dedicated to a similar purpose; and the convalescents were permitted to walk about the building, in the hope of finding some one among the many sufferers with whom they were acquainted; in consequence whereof, I was often disturbed by pale, woe-be-gone countenances, bending over my pillow, and anxiously scanning my features. Yet, in no instance, hitherto, had I recognised any familiar face, nor was I acknowledged by the scrutiny.

The body of the poor French guard had been just carried out of the room; and expecting, without in the least dreading, that my own

might be the next to be disposed of, I laid in a kind of stupor as nearly approaching to death as I imagine it possible for any thing to be, without the thread of existence having finally snapped. Visions of past days and hours of joy seemed as though crowding in review before me; and the well-known faces of my friends and brother soldiers seemed gazing upon me, as if they actually stood around my couch; but, among them all, there was one form which stood forward more prominently than the rest, and whose eye met mine, whichever way I tried to turn. Was it merely the deceitful vision of my disordered brain, or was it possible that the pale-faced Cornet stood before me in person? With a desperate effort, I half rose in my bed, and, extending my skeleton arms towards him, in a faint hollow voice, pronounced his name.

“That ’s me, old fellow, and no mistake;” replied the well-known sound, though in rather different modulation to what it was when I last heard it: “you seem to know me; but when, and where we met, perhaps you can state better than I can; and I say, old fellow, better be quick about it, for you don’t seem to have much time to spare.”

And so I thought myself; therefore, gathering together what little strength I possessed, I faintly replied, “Austin.”

“Austin?” echoed the Cornet, for he it was in substantial reality, “you’ve hit on a bad tack, my friend, be you who you may, for poor Harry Austin was buried yesterday—so try again:—poor fellow! the fever has addled his brain;” and, throwing a look of compassion upon me, he turned to depart: that was a dreadful moment. I knew I had no friend, not

even an acquaintance, in the place ; and, having lingered so long in hopeless solitude of communion, I had ceased to regard the possibility of ever again being restored to those I loved. But now, when I saw one of my intimate companions by my side, and evidently unconscious of my identity, on the point of leaving me to my fate, all the long slumberings of nature, clinging to life with pertinacious affection, rose in my bosom ; and, with a last desperate effort, I seized his hand, and exclaiming, “I would not have left *you* to die alone !” fell back, and fainted on my pillow.

From that moment, the pale-faced Cornet never left my side until, through his unwearied kindness and attention, I was declared out of danger. And, oh ! the heavenly rapture I experienced when, for the first time, I was permitted to leave that dreadful abode of suffering

and death, exceeds the power of description. Every object I beheld appeared as if surrounded with a halo of attractive beauty, such as my imagination had never before attempted to clothe them in. The least magnificent of Nature's works called forth spontaneous exclamations of praise and admiration ; whereas, prior to my illness, thousands similar, and probably far more wonderful and striking, instances of God's goodness might, most probably, have been passed by unheeded.

After a short space, I was enabled to occupy rooms in a different part of the town to that in which I had been condemned to dwell so long ; and when sufficiently recovered from the effects of my wound, so as to be enabled to take part in conversation, my pallid-visaged friend imparted the following circumstances relative to my entrance and sojourn in the hospital.

“ You may readily suppose,” commenced my companion, “ that I did not take up my abode in that head-quarter establishment of groans and wounds for my own particular amusement ; quite the contrary : but, as our friend D’Armagh said, when he embarked in the forge bellows, to avoid the pressing invitations of his creditors, it was more from compulsion than choice. In point of fact, old fellow, I got such an awful crack over my head that my friends thought it advisable I should for a time desist from what the lawyers call my professional pursuits ; and on my arrival at the seminary for cripples, the faculty discovered that the lower joint of my arm had been endeavouring to countermarch upon its centre, so as to bring my fingers somewhere about the proximity of my elbow. To counteract such an event, they set to work ; and what between screwing and splints, bandages

and lancets, I had only been able to crawl about, a few days prior to my fortunately discovering you were alive, for I still maintain I saw you buried with my own eyes, and dead you were returned. Now, don't suppose, old fellow, I had any hand in the business, for you well know I'd go any length to serve *you* ; but, I must confess, I *had* a little to do in bringing about those awful long faces which the doctors put on, when called to administer to a man whom, two days previously, they had consigned to the tomb.

“ In short, thus it was—wearied, almost to death, with the monotony of my convalescent state, I naturally turned my attention to whatever I fancied would promise amusement ; and, judging from the immense number of patients, and comparatively few doctors, I concluded it must be impossible for the latter to recollect

the countenances of all the former ; the more so, as grim Death took care they should not become too well acquainted for want of changing.

“ It did not escape my observation, likewise, that, whenever a poor fellow was carried out to his last home, the ticket which had been suspended over his head, and on which his name was inscribed, was of course taken down ; when, having entered his decease in a book kept for that purpose, the smaller record of his nomenclature was cast away.

“ Well, one day, when witnessing this oft-repeated proceeding, it occurred to me that some amusement, and no harm, could result from collecting some of the placards, whose owners were no more, and substituting them for the ones at present suspended. And, as the treatment observed towards each individual was dictated more from the immediate appearance of his

wounds, than from reference to the book, I concluded no harm could accrue to the poor fellows. Accordingly, I went to work, sometimes changing each other's tickets, and at others substituting those no longer of service ; but, I declare, old fellow, I had no knowledge of your being in that hospital, until I found your name among those which had been thrown away, and was informed that the grave then filling contained your mortal remains. But never mind, my boy, how it happened—here you are getting on as well as possible—the rumbling old coach waits to give us our daily shaking—so, don your beaver, Harry, and let's sally."

I am sure, had my pale-faced friend been aware of my existence, he would have done all in his power to alleviate my sufferings ; and that he changed my name intentionally I cannot for an instant suppose ; indeed his whole

conduct after having found me, and the unremitting attention which he bestowed, fully exonerate him from any such unjust suspicion, and though the circumstance of altering the tickets at all was decidedly wrong and unjustifiable, and might have been productive of serious consequences, yet, it cannot be imagined that the pallid gentleman pondered over the future results of this freak with greater seriousness than he had ruminated on the probable effects of his manifold prior performances.

Whether intentional or not mattered very little to me, at the time of my recovery ; but, as I afterwards discovered, the ultimate result was most disastrous, and, as will hereafter be seen, productive of great annoyance and loss : and many a time in after life, I much fear, the name of the pale gentleman has risen to my lips for any purpose rather than to couple it with a blessing.

One of my earliest inquiries was respecting my letters, which, it may be remembered, I hurriedly thrust into my bosom on the morning of the battle of Vittoria, but no information could be obtained. I had been found on the field, stript to my overalls, and, had not the fancy of my tailor thought proper to have inscribed my name on the waistband of that garment, I should, in all probability, have been returned "killed," or "missing," at once; as the matter then stood, such an agreeable piece of information for my friends was for the time postponed. I had been plundered of every thing I possessed—my valise had, of course, departed with my horse—my clothes, money, and even my boots, had been taken; nor was the miniature of my poor mother forgotten—not a vestige of any property was reserved to me, excepting the habiliment before named.

which only escaped the clutches of the spoilers in consideration of the good service it had already rendered its master.

To complain was useless ; so, carefully husbanding my strength, and paying every attention to effect a speedy and thorough recovery, I patiently waited for an opportunity to return home, the medical men agreeing that change of air was the only prescription likely to benefit me. My friend, the Cornet, having been more fortunate than myself, supplied me with what money I wanted ; and, having found an officer of the Commissariat with whom he was acquainted, I got my bills on London cashed without farther difficulty.

In course of time, I received orders, from the Medical Board, to commence my journey towards the coast ; while the Cornet, having perfectly recovered, was to proceed to join his regiment.

It was not, however, decreed that we were to part so quietly ; and, indeed, I often wondered that his unconquerable propensity had not brought us into a scrape sooner. But it came at last, and was as difficult an adventure to manage as any knight-errant could have desired, and thus it was.

CHAPTER IX.

“I’VE seen the most angelic creature eyes ever beheld, Austin,” exclaimed he of the white visage, now rendered, by his recent illness, far whiter than ever. “Without exception, she is the most perfect combination of loveliness I ever encountered. If it had not been for that lynx-eyed duéña, I would have introduced myself; but, as it is, I made my feelings pretty intelligible.”

“More than you could have accomplished by your language, I imagine,” I replied.

“Likely enough,” he answered; “but the

method I adopted, to make myself understood, seemed successful in as far as I could desire. Signs, old fellow, signs will do more for a man, any day, than language, unless it be the language of the eyes ; and I'll knock under to no man in that accomplishment. I'll bet fifty to one you'll say she's the very perfection of symmetry itself. Such hands, feet, eyes, hair, and figure ! But what's the good of talking to you, who don't know her ? You can't feel as I do ! No ! It 's impossible you can !”

“ I dare say not,” I rejoined, laughing ; “ but beware of getting into some awful scrape in this place. Recollect that, in four days, you leave Vittoria ; and, having steered clear of trouble hitherto, there cannot be any advantage in thrusting your neck into the noose at this the eleventh hour. Moreover, you will bear

in mind that the Spaniards are the most revengeful fellows in existence; and the odds are that this fair incognita of yours is surrounded with as many cousins, uncles and brothers as there are saints in the calendar, and each of them furnished with a not always blunt *cuchillo*, the blade of which you may find about the same length as their pedigrees. I 'd advise you to think no more about her."

"Think no more about her, indeed," was the reply. "Easy enough for you to say 'think no more about her;' but I 'd rather lose the best horse I have in my stable, if, indeed, I *have* any left me, than forego the chance of again beholding that more than seraphic countenance." And here the white-faced mortal launched forth into such marvellous hyperboles as to make it too decidedly evident he was bent on destruction.

“I’m determined to see her, old fellow,” he continued. “Aye, and see her within twenty-four hours, too, and, by all that’s dangerous, you shall behold her likewise, my boy; ’t will do your heart good. Such ancles, such feet, such a walk!” And off he went again, through all the endearing terms the English language could supply, at a pace that would have killed the Holyhead mail to have tried at.

“I should be very sorry were you to trouble yourself on my account,” was my answer. “I can readily take your word for the lady’s beauty, without having ocular proof—so never mind me, in the least degree.”

“But I *do* mind you, in a very considerable degree,” he answered sharply; “and if you don’t accompany me, Austin, I shall take it very unkind, indeed, on your part.”

“Accompany you where?” I inquired.

“Never mind where, just at present. I’ll let you know in due time, the moment I’ve completed my arrangements: so, farewell, till dinner—recollect, I’ll take no excuse; but expect you’ll stick by me through thick and thin, let happen what may.” And off he started, to concoct as mad an exploit as his debtors—if any such people existed—could have desired.

In my then weak state, both of body and nerves, I would willingly have been spared the task of accompanying him in the expedition which he seemed so extremely anxious to thrust on me; but, recollecting all the privations and annoyances to which he had subjected himself during my illness, I could not refuse, at his solicitation, to do that which my own judgement condemned as a superabundant piece of extravagant folly; yet, having once made up my determination to go, I bethought me of the

necessary precautions, and, among others, of borrowing a brace of small pistols, which I engaged as my companions for the occasion.

Italy is the land of song, aye, and love likewise ; but surely there are other spots where ‘the fire, once enkindled, becomes impetuous and is sometimes devastating in its effects.’ And where, more so, than in Spain? It is, alas ! but too true that the days of her splendour have passed away—that glorious epoch, when the conquering Moslem, extending his warlike and skilful hordes through her beauteous valleys and sunny plains—erected his gorgeous mosques and gilded palaces in the midst of the fragrant groves and luxurious gardens which, on every side, invited the conqueror to fix his home—and where, as if by magic, sprung up those works of elaborate taste, the remains of which are still visible, striking the beholder with

wonder and amazement, as the unparalleled achievements of those whom, in our ignorance, we are pleased to term barbarians, are unfolded to our view.

That period has passed. Yet, though the martial sound of the Moorish cymbal and the neigh of the impatient war-steed have ceased to be heard at the gate of the golden-roofed Harem; and though the aromatic perfumes of Asia no longer ascend from the enamelled vase, winding their odoriferous clouds amid the silvery shower from the marble fountains, impregnating the cool air with a most delicious fragrance; and though her days of luxury and glory be no more—still the bosoms of her daughters throb with as fierce and conflicting passions now as ever influenced the dark-eyed maidens in times long past.

The lovely object who, wandering listlessly

along the banks of the bright Guadalquiver, brushing the various flowers which bestrew the path with the gentle pressure of her delicate foot, though simply adorned in the dark, yet ever graceful, mantilla, and divested of all the magnificence of apparel with which her equals, though not superiors, in loveliness were accustomed to array themselves—that fragile form, that delicate being, possesses a heart which, if touched by the resistless shaft of love, might blaze forth with an energy and fervour unsurpassed by any record of what the female character, when fearfully excited, is capable of performing—for good—or, for evil.

There are scenes of magnificent beauty and spots of loveliness in Spain, which it would be difficult to excel by comparison with any others. The ever varying tints of the evening sun, reclining on the sides and summits of the distant

mountains, and touching with his glorious rays the transparent stream, as it majestically winds along their base, with the numberless gay pavilions which rear their picturesque heads from beds of the most fragrant exotics, make the scene, at that hour in particular, appear more beautiful than ever.

Groves of the luscious orange, the fragrant citron, and the wide spreading fig-tree, add to the splendour of the landscape, and fill the air with their refreshing perfumes. And the tall palm and dark-leaved cork tree raise their exalted heads amid a wilderness of blooming geraniums, vine and aloe, intermixed with an almost endless variety of fruit, flower, and shrub, such as no other country can boast.

In the calm stillness of the summer's evening, in such a scene as this, may be heard the wild notes of the guitar issuing from the porch of

many a rustic hamlet, ornamented with the sweet smelling jessamine and rose, while the little dwelling is hemmed in and protected by an impassable boundary of prickly pear. At such an hour, when the dull, tedious labours of the day no longer clog the soul of man with the monotonous occurrences of human toil, then it is that a soft feeling of conscious, yet calm, happiness, creeps over the mind; and in such a moment is it that the voice of one loved strikes with an electricity upon the heart, causing an acknowledged reciprocity of affection, to the exclusion of all other earthly things, but which, in all probability, a less tranquil and delicious moment might have failed in creating.

Those who dwell on the soft influence of the soul-stirring glances, from the eyes of "Italy's daughters," to the exclusion of all others—cannot have visited Spain. But I have made

too long a digression from my narrative, and must recal my wandering imagination to the reality of the pale-faced officer's exploits, who had been busily engaged, since we parted, in collecting a fund of information, scraped together by the aid of bits of French, Spanish, English and Italin; but, on endeavouring to connect his variegated intelligence bit by bit, as children do a puzzle, he found it impossible to make any two pieces accord.

Giving up, therefore, all hope of succeeding in his own *propria persona*, without foreign aid, he resolved on procuring a deputy; to effect which, he put enquiries on foot, as to the eligibility of the various applicants for the honour of the appointment; but the qualifications required by the Cornet were so diametrically opposite to those professed by the aspirants that he was nearly in despair at his ill

fortune. The two essential requisites demanded, were unbounded obedience to whatever order he might issue, and matchless cunning and effrontery to carry such mandates into execution.

It is not every body who would have acknowledged himself sufficiently talented to perform the duties exacted, with such ability and success as to prove himself no novice at his employment; but, at length, one gentleman presented himself who, if the face be a mirror of the mind, had an undoubted right of priority to the place over all those who had preceded him in his application.

This worthy was a native of Andalusia; and as, perchance, some of my fair readers may not have had opportunities of beholding any of those people, in their original, native state, I will briefly describe him. His age could not have exceeded six-and-twenty. His figure was

slight—well formed and tall—his features handsome—but the deep cunning that twinkled in his hazel eyes, and the disagreeable leer which hung about the corners of his lips, destroyed the otherwise prepossessing appearance of his countenance. Like the rest of his countrymen, his hair was dark, and curled closely round his forehead—he wore small whiskers—no moustaches—and the shirt, open at the throat, discovered a finely formed, muscular, yet sun-burnt, neck. He had on the brown leather shoes of his country, which were joined by a gaiter of the same colour, curiously marked and extending to within a few inches of the knee, leaving the calf of the leg exposed—the gaiter being fastened simply by one loop at the bottom and one at the top, where it was met by his inexpressible garments of a mulberry-coloured cloth, fitting tight to the shape, and having a thickly studded

row of silver buttons descending by each outward seam. As I before said, he wore his shirt open at the breast, disclosing his very white and well plaited linen—a blue silk handkerchief was tied loosely about his neck, fastening with a large knot in front, ornamented by a brooch. His waistcoat (of velvet) was likewise adorned with a profusion of silver tags and buttons, while the jacket, made of the skin of a black lamb, and similarly bedecked, formed the outer covering to his person. Round the waist was twisted, in many folds, the ever present red sash, bearing in its creases the *cuchilla*, or knife, without which the Spaniard never moves. His head was bound round with a gaudy coloured handkerchief, leaving the ends hanging over the nape of the neck to protect it from the influence of the sun. Surmounting all, was the black hat, shaped somewhat like a sugar loaf, decorated

by a broad velvet band round the centre—while a very extensive rim, turned up equally all round, completed his dress.

I was present when he made his appearance, and his intended master and himself seemed to understand each other immediately.

“You know the description of person I want?” enquiringly asked the Cornet, in a language of any country you please, but which he denominated true Castilian—“you know what I want?”

“Si, Señor,” replied the guide, for such was his calling, when at home, at Ronda.

“And you engage to do any thing whatever, that I may require of you, without scruple?” was the next question.

“Si, Señor.”

“Bien está,” replied the Cornet. “Work well and I’ll pay well.”

“Puede usted, darme un poco de dinero adelanta do?”

“What, you want some down, do you?”

“Si, Señor, si usted gusta.” And accordingly a doubloon was produced on the table; and the Andalusian swallowing a glass of *aguardiente*, by way of ratifying the engagement, departed.

In my opinion, the time had now arrived when I might make further enquiries on the subject of our intended adventure; and the account my friend gave, of the leading features of the case, was not at all calculated to diminish my anxiety as to the possible result.

The object of the white-faced gentleman's sudden attachment proved to be the Señorita Agnes Ildefonso, the only daughter of as proud and haughty a Spaniard as his native town of Soria, in Old Castile, could produce. Not dissimilar to the generality of Castilian Nobles,

the contending parties and conflicting interests of those whose misgovernment had for years rent the bosom of his once splendid country stripped him of most part of his worldly goods, leaving little beyond his Castilian pride and prejudice to exist on.

By one of those sudden freaks of fortune, which so seldom benefit those on whom the advantage appears to fall, a distant relation of the pompous Don departed this life, bequeathing to the Señorita Agnes the undisputed possession of some six or seven thousand *pesos duros*, or, in English money, somewhere about twelve or fourteen hundred pounds. This sum, to the eyes of the naturally abstemious Spaniard, opened endless visions of the everlasting *olla podrida* flavoured with the detestable *ajo* or garlick. And it was not until the learned *abogado* of Soria had pointed out the impos-

sibility of any part of his daughter's money being appropriated to himself that the disappointed old gentleman seemed to consider the bequest as a personal insult towards him, and an unpardonable crime committed by his daughter.

In this feeling he was greatly encouraged by divers huge-whiskered sons, each of whom, attracted by the news of this vast accession of wealth, had rapidly returned from his obscure place of abode, hoping to participate in a share of the unexpected windfall. Judge, then, what their feelings must have been when made acquainted with the lawyer's decision! At first, they boldly denied the correctness of his assertion, but on that head they were speedily and painfully put right; yet, loud and manifold were their exclamations of rage and disappointment, when the old, hoary-headed sire devised

that common, though refined, piece of cruelty,—which, thank God, no longer exists, of forcing his child to take the veil.

No sooner was this infamous project broached than the proposal was rapturously acceded to by the male members of the family, and, well knowing the rapacity of the superiors in all convents and monasteries throughout Spain, they straightway adopted every fraud and deceit that artifice could suggest, in the hope of depreciating the amount of their sister's possessions in the eyes of the world. To place her in a convent within his own province, where the story of her fortune was probably a familiar topic of conversation, could not be thought of, since the Church would demand the whole of her riches, as a return for admittance within the sacred pale. It was therefore judged expedient to proceed to Vittoria, where, amid the excite-

ment of the times and the stirring occurrences which the period had given birth to, it was, at least, improbable that the tale of the Señor's domestic affairs should have held a place in the knowledge of its inhabitants.

In this conjecture they were correct; and, for a far less sum than had been anticipated, it was agreed that the Señorita was to enter on her noviciate, and, in due time, take that irrevocable step—the veil; leaving the remainder of her money for the plunder of relations, by whom she was to be offered up, a lovely and unwilling sacrifice, to a living tomb.

One old and hideous *duéña* was the sole being, of her own sex, who was permitted to approach her person, and whose greedy anticipation of receiving the promised portion of the blood money rendered her doubly vigilant and alert. Thus, through the intended kindness of

her relation, this lovely and gentle-hearted girl was singled out, as an object for unceasing persecution by her kindred, until the gates of the dreaded building should have closed, between her and the world, for ever ; but only to undergo those austere penances and privations within, which the discontented superiors of the mis-named religious houses heaped upon the heads of those unfortunate sufferers who, by the machinations of sordid avarice, cruelty, or detestation, had been cast within their dreaded meshes.

The whole family was assembled at Vittoria, having taken a house adjoining the convent where the wretched girl was to be immured for ever ; and the only time she had been permitted to cross the threshold, even when accompanied by the ever-watchful dueña, was two days previous, when the Cornet returned to

our lodgings in such ecstasies regarding her.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon the day before, when our Andalusian guide withdrew from the conference with his employer, having first received orders to be in close attendance by seven, to obtain further instructions; and, as the day after that following was the one fixed upon for the Señorita's admission into the convent, it was evident that there was no time to be lost. Yet, although not over-scrupulous in most things, I pondered, before aiding and abetting in an act which, for aught I could tell to the contrary, might hereafter assume rather a disagreeable complexion on the tablets of my memory; and, determining to avoid all unpleasant reminiscences, as far as laid in my power, I resolved to ascertain, from my gallant companion in arms, the precise nature of what the ladies in Ireland are pleased to denominate "*his intintions.*"

The pale-faced lover was industriously engaged in the careful examination of the locks of a brace of long-barrelled Spanish pistols, when I interrupted him, requesting to be furnished with a more elaborate explanation of his final views than he had as yet favoured me with—ending with the simple, but not to be misunderstood enquiry, as to the line of conduct he purposed to adopt, in the event of our succeeding in rescuing her from her impending fate, which sacrifice he declared the lady to contemplate as a final extinction to all her earthly ideas of happiness.

“All right, old fellow,” replied my companion, “right as the mail; my Audalusian friend has not been idle, I assure you; and, by dint of money and management, I’ve opened a correspondence with the Señorita herself, in which she declares her readiness to trust her-

self, honour and all, in my keeping, with a perfect reliance on the word of a British officer—so what can I do, my boy? cant flinch—double round—cut—and leave the poor girl to her fate—that won't be fair; I must work through the business, the game 's on the cards, and by the Immaculate, I'll play it out."

"Well, well," I rejoined, "that 's all fair enough; but do you mean to marry her? Recollect your family, your connections, your being on the eve of marching up to join your regiment, your never having seen the lady but once, your complete ignorance of her temper, disposition, and ten thousand other good and cogent reasons why you should let this affair drop. It's not too late, yet; and, though you may regret the loss of your adventure at the moment, you will be amply rewarded for your present forbearance hereafter."

“My dear friend,” answered the Cornet, “you greatly mistake. It is too late to be off, far too late ; but, even were it not so, I pledge you my word I would not desist in this affair until I had been so worsted as to prove the utter impossibility of success ; but, at present, every thing in the undertaking prospers, and to-night, or never, the poor girl shall be emancipated from her thralldom ; you ask, do I mean to marry her ? my reply is, a regret that you had not conceived a better opinion of me than to suppose otherwise. And, wild as I may have appeared in many of our by-gone freaks, I trust you do not suppose me so consummate a fool as to rush headlong into matrimony, without knowing something regarding the family of my wife. I have made full and ample inquiries, and they have been minutely, and in a most satisfactory manner, replied to.”

“Don Julian Raineus Diogracias Ildefonso—that is what the old gentleman lugs through the world by way of a name—can boast of possessing in his veins as pure blood as circulates through the body of any noble in Old Castile; and it would take as long to work through the pedigree of his family as it would occupy in teaching a marine to ride. Her mother’s name and titles would reach from here to Ostend; and the consummate pride of the whole batch is only to be equalled in amount by what old Burslem’s horror must have been when he took his coy, loving bride to his arms.”

“Then, why the devil do you marry into such a family?” I enquired.

“Why not?” replied the Cornet; “I’m not going to marry old Don Damnable, with the thousand names; neither do I mean to have

any thing to do with the three whiskered brothers ; all I want, is the lady. In point of family, hers is as good as mine—in regard to money, I have enough for both. The French have been driven over the Pyrenees, and we shall soon have peace ; and, what 's more, there is an adventnre in the case, and so I'm as fixed as fate."

Perceiving the futility of further argument on the subject, and knowing the almost impossibility of turning my friend's thoughts into another channel, when a practical joke, or desperate adventure, was on hand, I forbore pressing his relinquishment on the affair ; and merely inquired how he intended to proceed.

"Ha ! ha ! ha !" laughed the Cornet, squinting down one of the pistol barrels which he had just cleaned to his satisfaction, "why, you've turned wag in your old days, Harry—proceed

indeed! why, my dear boy, at this moment, Don Fusbos, or whatever that terrible long name of his may be, is proceeding along the high road to Soria, in a state of mind bordering on madness—proceed! by my faith, Harry, thanks to the Andalusian, the game proceeds bravely—started the governor—bagged the duéña.”

“How do you mean, bagged the duéña?” I inquired.

“Why, I mean exactly what I say:” and the Cornet laughed and chuckled, until his pale face became the colour of a cardinal’s hat. “What! did’nt you know I had got her?”

“Got her! not I, how should I? where is she?”

“There,” he sputtered out, hardly able to articulate from laughing, and pointing to a door which led to an inner apartment—“There—in a sack—ha! ha! ha!”

In a moment, I rushed into the room, and, to my utter amazement, squatting in a corner like a hare on her form, was the shrivelled head and features of a horrible old woman of about sixty—a slight bandage was passed across her mouth, to prevent any undue articulation on her part; while the end of a sack, in which she was placed, tied tightly round her throat, afforded at once a durable frill to the neck, and a stout covering for the lower part of her body. Her little black eyes flashed most indignantly, and, though it was impossible for her to raise her voice in invective, she ever and anon gave her head such fierce and sudden jerks as forcibly reminded me of the Mandarin figures you often see in the shops at Brighton, going at half-price, on account of being out of order.

“In Heaven’s name!” I exclaimed—“What’s this?”

“What’s what?” echoed the practical gentleman.

“Why, that thing in the sack?” I replied, pointing to the palsy-headed figure.

“That’s the *dueña*, my governess that is to be. Shall I introduce you?”

“Cease your nonsense,” I answered: “surely that’s not the way to treat a woman. What have you gagged her for?”

“Because she hollows so confoundedly.”

“But why put her in a sack?”

“Because she scratches,” was the immediate answer.

“But tell me,” I continued, “how did you get her?”

“Oh, easy enough,” added the pale practitioner, “all varmint take bait—but I’ll tell you how it was; yet stay a bit, I don’t want to keep the old devil tied hand and foot, like an Ashantee

waiting to be cooked for his friend's dinner; but, if I let her loose, she fights and scratches worse than a dozen cats round a dog's-meat man's barrow."

"Oh, nonsense," I replied, "poor old wretch, let her out of that abominable sack — I'm ashamed to see a woman in such a state."

"And I have a shrewd suspicion," was the answer, "that you'd be ashamed to see yourself in the glass, if once she got her claws on your countenance. Why, she has already made ruts in the Andalusian's face as deep as the furrows in a ploughed field, but, I'll try her once more. Here, Juan," and strightway he summoned his recently elected Prime Minister.

When Juan appeared, it was palpably evident that his master had "nothing extenuated, nor aught set down in malice," as related to the unbounded freedom her nails had taken with

the guide's visage which presented a picture truly pitiable; yet, notwithstanding his beauty had thus suffered a temporary obscurity, the good-humoured Spaniard seemed in no wise inclined to bear malice against this pugnacious specimen of the fair sex; on the contrary, he willingly entered into our views, and, by means of his interpretation the dueña was persuaded to rest in quietness and silence, provided the impediments to the free use of her tongue and limbs were removed. This arrangement settled, and the antique dame having been frequently assured she should be placed at liberty and in safety, on the following morning, she was persuaded to sit down to a comfortable repast, and she had caused a considerable diminution of the contents of a bottle of *vino blanco*, ere we left her to the enjoyment of her own reflections.

I was naturally extremely curious to know

by what stratagem so cautious an old lady had been ensnared by the Cornet, and, having gained our own apartment, he thus unbosomed himself.

“I have already told you, old fellow,” he commenced, “that to-morrow morning will either see the Señorita Agnes my wife, or else the inmate of an impregnable convent; and as the former is the consummation most to be desired, I judged it expedient to remove from her person those individuals from whose caution and officiousness we have most to dread.

“To effect this, I proceeded with my trusty Andalusian to an *escribano publico*, or notary, who, I was informed, would—if paid for it—write as many lies in twelve minutes as any other man could speak in twelve months. Having found this worthy, he readily undertook to pen a letter, as if from a respectable house in Soria, stating that circumstances had come to

light, whereby it was proved that the Señorita Agnes was entitled to a much larger amount of her relation's money than had hitherto been supposed; but so great was the villany of the executors that, unless the legal guardian of the lady made his immediate appearance, there was not the most remote chance of its being recovered. This precious epistle was then sealed and directed to the Don with the long name, and forthwith handed to Juan, who, having been first well crammed, as we used to say at Cambridge, was instructed to make his appearance at the old gentleman's door, covered with dust and heat, as if just arrived from a long journey, for the purpose of delivering the packet and enjoining his instant departure.

“So far, so well; but, exclusive of that epistle, he was charged with another directed to the Duéña, in which the old lady was informed that

her friend, the Don, was grossly deceiving her, by urging her acceptance of so small a pittance as was to be her share of the prize money ; for, in point of fact, by the original will bequeathing the property, it expressly stated that a much larger sum than that which she was to receive ought to be handed over to the lady, whoever she might be, who superintended the Señorita's education until she was nineteen ; and, consequently, if her fair charge were immured within the walls of a convent, that sum would be lost to the Duéña for ever. The epistle further added that the writer was actuated only by a sense of justice, and if the lady would call at his house, naming our lodgings, immediately after morning mass, he would put her in possession of the important document.

“ Off started Juan to the Don's, when he knew the old lady would be absent at mass—

rushed into the house with the air of a man bearing intelligence of most vital import—crammed the letter into the old gentleman's face—swore, with a marvellous rapidity, there was not a moment to lose—urged the necessity of expedition in such a powerful strain of elocution that the sons, seeing nothing beyond a further accumulation of wealth to themselves, willingly joined in his request—a vehicle which we had already prepared in a neighbouring street, drove briskly to the door; and before Don Julian Rainerus Diogracias Ildefonso thoroughly understood the purport of the letter which he held in his hand, consequently immeasurably prior to his possessing the least power of remonstrance, he was hoisted on the shoulders of his sons, thrust into the carriage, where one of Juan's companions waited to receive him, and off they went, the Lord knows where; but his keeper

is bound to detain him till to-morrow night. That bait having taken, away went Juan, changed his dress, and appeared at the church doors just as the worshippers were quitting it, and, having discovered the Duéña, it was no difficult matter to transfer the second letter from his possession into hers.

“Those who are habituated to the practice of deceit are ever ready in suspecting others, and so it proved, as I had anticipated; for, instead of giving herself time coolly to think the matter over, the little woman, furious at the supposition of having been deceived, rushed headlong from an imaginary danger into the actual toils prepared for her reception; willingly she obeyed the signal of the Andalusian to follow him, and, in ten minutes afterwards, we had her in the sack.

“Thus, old fellow, you will perceive, we are

now rid of our two most formidable opponents. The old Don is wending his way God only knows whither; and the ancient lady thinks, at this moment, much more of her *vino blanco* than she does of the Señorita's danger, for, of course, we have kept her in ignorance touching the departure of her confederate. But let's have dinner, it's getting late, and I think we may need refreshment before the night's over." To which proposal I willingly acceded; and, in as far as our libations went, we soon beat the old lady hollow.

"The mules are all ready, Señor," said Juan, thrusting his learned physiognomy into our apartment.

"Bueno," replied the adventurous Cornet, and straightway we sallied forth upon our expedition.

It was between ten and eleven o'clock. The

night, unfortunately for us, was far from being as dark as we might have desired; but, as we wound our way along the narrow streets of the town, it was a source of gratification to find our passage uninterrupted by a single nocturnal promenader. All was as quiet as though the long close lanes we were threading boasted no human tenants in their mansions; and, excepting the noise occasioned by the mules' progress over the ill-paved causeway, not a sound was to be heard in the city.

After many windings and cautious reconnoitrings round the neighbourhood of our destination, we were directed to dismount by the wall of a huge, old, pile of building, which the Cornet informed me was the outside of the much dreaded convent. "Silencio," whispered our guide, laying his finger on his lips. "silencio, Señores;" and accordingly we stood

as grave and mute as Gog and Magog formerly did in Guildhall.

Having fastened our mules at some short distance from the house, preceded by Juan, we advanced to the attack, that skilful engineer having reconnoitred the fortress on the preceding day, in the hope of discovering some weak point in the defences, where his ingenuity might enable him to effect a breach in the walls, but, being baffled in his expectations, the scaling party was ordered to advance. Availing himself of the advantages offered by the projecting iron railings which, worked into a massive frame, invariably protect the lower windows of a Spanish house on the side looking into the street, and clinging to each protruding stone of the building, with the agility of a cat, Juan speedily attained the summit of the outer wall, when, having thereto firmly

fixed the hook of the rope ladder which he carried with him, he soon rejoined us in the street.

The convent bells had not as yet chimed the midnight hour; and, although every thing outside the old gentleman's house was as quiet as the grave, it was necessary to proceed with extreme caution, since the inside might not imitate a similar tranquillity, the more so as the brothers must unavoidably be much chagrined and astonished at the prolonged and unusual absence of the Duéña.

Stealthily, and without uttering a syllable, the Cornet placed his foot on the rope, and commenced his ascent, followed by myself, while the guide firmly held the ladder at the bottom; but, before we had reached the top, an indistinct murmur of voices met our ears. At the recommendation of the Andalusian, we had

divested ourselves of all cumbrous garments, not excepting our hats, in order to ensure the free use of our limbs, if called upon for any extraordinary exertion. The moon was now shining in all her splendour, and willingly would we have foregone the beauty of her appearance, in exchange for a cloud as black and dingy as the outside of a mourning-coach; but, as wishing seldom produces the desired effect, so all we could do was cautiously to lay down on the broad top of the wall, the *guid* having selected that side for our ascent which was most thickly clothed in shade.

The scene now laid open to my view was picturesque in the extreme; and, for the first few seconds, while gazing on the group below, I entirely forgot the object which had drawn me to the spot. Not so my practical friend, for, although his eye embraced the whole,

equally with mine, his ideas as to the different uses to which things and persons could be turned differed wonderfully from notions commonly entertained by his fellow mortals.

The generality of old Spanish houses are entered by a high archway, leading into a tolerably wide portico, furnished on both sides with marble benches, and having the sides and ceilings decorated with the arms of the proprietor, or other devices, worked in various coloured tiles and pebbles in the walls. At the end of this porch or entrance, stands the door opening into the building, a small grating being usually let in at the upper part, to enable the occupant to scan his visitor, previous to admitting him within his sanctuary. Having effected the entrance, you find yourself in a large, square court, in the centre of which, rising from a plat of velvet turf, a marble fountain sculptured

according to the taste of the owner, throws up its cool delicious water, which, descending into the large basin beneath, with a soft gurgling sound, casts an irresistible charm and delightful languor over all within its influence. The citron and the fig-tree claim likewise their share of the court, while, from two opposite sides of the square, a broad flight of marble steps conducts you to the corridor which, running round the whole building, looks into the luxuriant garden ; while the apartments, for the accommodation of the family, branch out from this shaded terrace, leading into the deeper interior of the mansion.

There were two lights glimmering through different parts of the gilt trellis work of the balcony ; and close to one of which, as if cast by accident on the richly carved balustrade, lay a splendidly embroidered scarf—the golden

threads, varying in appearance under the influence of the bright moon, vied in beauty with the diamond shower from the fountain. There was nothing whereby to mark the tenant of the apartment where the remaining light still flickered in its silver sconce; but, immediately beneath, and reposing in different attitudes under the spreading branches of the fragrant orange trees, the three brothers listlessly reposed, smoking the never-rejected cigar; not a syllable was exchanged among them—each being apparently fully occupied with his own thoughts.

The picturesque costume of the Spaniards,—the soft murmur from the fountain, the mellowed light peering through the elaborately worked lattice of the balconies, and the delicious perfumes from the adjacent flowers and shrubs completed a scene which, had the pencil of the

artist been there to pourtray it, might have afforded ample scope for the exercise of his talents.

Without daring to move our bodies in the slightest degree, for fear of detection, there we all lay—Juan having joined us—as motionless as the coping of the wall on which we reclined ; and I, for one, was fast forgetting the beauty of the scene, in the certainty of my unpleasant position, when a conversation was commenced by one of the two. What the subject might have been we were too distant to overhear ; but I concluded it must have related to the absence of the old lady, for, after exchanging a few words with the others, one of the party rose—and, having opened the door leading into the porch, walked forth into the street. Here his examination was soon ended, for he almost immediately returned to his companions, having closed the

street-door after him, but leaving the key in the lock as it had been before.

A few expressions of surprise were then uttered by all three ; and, as if deeming it useless to tarry longer for the arrival of a person who, apparently, was no way inclined to make her appearance, two of the party rose from their recumbent positions, and, after sundry yawns and low-muttered execrations against the disturber of their night's rest, they slowly and sleepily wound their way to the apartment where the last mentioned light still continued to flare its feeble flame.

Left to himself, the other Caballéro commenced a fresh cigar, and it now became pretty evident that the gentlemen intended to take turn about, in watching through the night, and as the appearance of day light must unavoidably bring with it either the failure of our enterprize,

or detection, we watched the proceedings of the brother with no small anxiety.

I thought the cigar never would have ended. Like the purse, in the Arabian Nights, that no one could empty, so it appeared to me that it was impossible to convert that piece of tobacco into smoke. Puff—puff—worked the Spaniard, yet there was no visible diminution of the weed, and I don't know but it might have lasted up to this hour, had not the practical gentleman, in his impatience at this unlooked for delay, loosened a bit of mortar from his resting place, which, falling among the bushes beneath, started the reclining guardian to his feet.

Most fortunately for us, so deep had been the brown study in which he was immersed, and so full were his thoughts on the two subjects of more money, and the old woman's absence, that he was quite at a loss to know whence the

sound proceeded, in which dilemma he again paid a visit to the street, and on his return found the light of the cigar—which, in his first alarm he had dropped—extinguished.

I take it, the Caballéro must have been something of a philosopher; for, after two or three ineffectual attempts to re-kindle life in the bosom of his friend, he merely shrugged up his shoulders with an air of resignation, placed the remnant of the soothing narcotic in his girdle, laid down on the grass, and in five minutes his olfactory nerve gave pleasing intimation of the degree of vigilance with which he executed the trust confided to his keeping.

“Now’s the time,” whispered the Cornet. “Softly, softly, and the moment we’re ready, Austin, you cram your handkerchief half way down the brute’s throat—you, Juan, seize his legs and bind them,—and I’ll throw myself

right across his body, pinning both his arms—come.” In safety and in silence we reached the court, and, creeping almost noiselessly across the turf—the sound of our steps being rendered inaudible by the play of the fountain—in a few seconds we stood by our unconscious victim.

“Are you ready?” Breathed the pale mortal.

“Ready,” was the reply.

“Then seize him.” And, without the chance of a struggle, the descendant of generations and generations of heroes, counts and princes, lay as immoveable as his progenitors who had strutted their short hour on the stage of life before him.

“Bravo,” cried the delighted Cornet in a low tone. “Now for the others: if they’re asleep all we have to do will to be to tread quietly and fasten them into their room; if awake, we must take our chance and have at them—so here goes.” And off he went on tiptoe up

the stairs, as nimbly as a rope-dancer at Astley's, and, by signs, soon gave us to understand that the two brothers were in no condition to oppose our proceedings; gently closing their door therefore, and bolting it on the outside, we left them to sleep over the fatigues of their watching.

Opposition seemed now at an end; and the Señorita, who had observed our proceedings from her balcony, came hastily forward to thank her benefactor, for so she termed the pallid lover. And there was a scene of sighs, and groans, and blushes, by the side of the fountain by moonlight, which would have been worth a thousand a year to any one working up a tale of true love, for distribution in a young ladies' seminary.

"Vamos," cried Juan impatiently, unlocking the door leading to the street, "vamos, señores."

“Si, Juan, vamos,” I chimed in, anxious to put an end to this ill-timed exhibition of the affections, “come along, come.”

“Come along then, old boy, look out into the street and see if all’s right, Juan;” exclaimed the Cornet.

“Si, señor,” replied the Andalusian. “But shall we leave the Caballéro here?” pointing to the prostrate Castilian.

“Oh, no, far from it,” said the Cornet. “I’ve thought of a place for him, long since. Have you remarked, Austin, with what bad taste the fountain, there, sends up one long stream of water, instead of branching out bell fashion, like the lip of a claret glass on the top of a convolvulus? ’Pon my faith, but it’s a pity so pretty an article should be spoiled for want of taste.”

“Are you mad?” I exclaimed, “to stand here talking such infernal nonsense, when, in two

minutes, you may have half the town in pursuit of you."

"Devil the bit;" said the Cornet, "but I must alter that thing, if I die for it. Here, Juan, help me to hoist my brother-in-law on the top of the fountain." And in one second the water meeting with an unlooked for impediment to its accustomed egress, darted out indignantly in every possible and imaginable direction, in the midst of which, strapped securely to the pedestal, sat the Caballéro, the very picture of a river God, around whose form the limpid element squirted, showered, and fell, in a manner which would have done infinite credit to the principal director of the Chatsworth water-works.

"Austin," enquired the Cornet, as we all four jogged down the narrow streets leading to our lodgings—having taken care to bring away the old Don's key with us—"Austin, why's my

brother-in-law like the orderly officer in a cavalry regiment?"

"Why?" I enquired.

"Because," chuckled the Cornet, "he's got the watering order parade to himself." Having uttered which witticism, we dismounted at the door of our abode.

Our servants had not been idle during our absence, for we found every thing packed and arranged for instant departure. All pecuniary matters had been adjusted the day before—a carriage, with four good mules, waited to convey my friend and the Señorita to the frontiers—and my horse, together with my servants, sumpter mule, and guide, stood in the court prepared for our march towards the coast. Nothing now remained but to go through the marriage ceremony, which an accomodating padre was kind enough to perform, for certain considerations

and penances, and then to consume the excellent supper which was to compose our last meal in Vittoria.

Recollecting the old lady was still an inmate of the house, I went to fetch her to the banquet ; but so soundly did she sleep, or feign,—I know not which—that, being seized with a fit of compassion, I had her undressed and laid comfortably in the bed where the Cornet was accustomed to repose ; but, as I afterwards heard, my good-natured intentions failed in their purpose, for the Duéña having been discovered during the day, in the spot where I had placed her, the scandalous reports which were circulated to her detriment were, as my informant stated, absolutely awful : poor old soul, I am confident they were unfounded.

A merrier party than we presented could not possibly have assembled round a supper

table. The lovely bride was, in truth, as the Cornet had affirmed, beautiful indeed, and certainly inferior to none whom I had ever beheld, if I except my handsome cousin Mary. How I came to think of her at that moment I know not; but the remembrance brought with it some sensations which were so much out of place on the occasion, that it took divers tumblers of champaign before I could regain my former joyousness of spirits.

Dearest friends must part. And as a faint streak of day glimmered in the east, we judged it prudent to decamp. It had been intended to have taken the padre some miles in the road with the newly married couple, for fear of any untimely communication on his part; but so frequent were his professions of friendship, and so much wine did he require to enable him to express his feelings, that, when the time for de-

parture arrived, he was incapable of motion. We were therefore compelled to leave him where he lay, which contributed not a little to the embellishment of the tale, having for its theme the old lady's delinquencies.

"Vaya vm. con Dios, Señor," murmured as sweet a voice as it ever fell to my lot to listen to; "viva vm. muchos años," and I felt my finger encircled with a memento of her gratitude for my small share in her emancipation. A tear, I hardly know why, almost glistened in my eye, as the sylph-like form of the beautiful girl sprang into the carriage.

"God bless you, old fellow," exclaimed the Cornet. "Ten thousand thanks for all you've done for me. I can't express what I feel, but hang it, Harry, you understand me. Farewell! Austin, and please God, we'll meet again."

"Vamos," shouted Juan. The carriage rolled

on—and I stood in the court-yard of our lodging, with one foot in the stirrup and none but my guide and servant by me. My friend had departed, and I was alone. He, whose kindness had saved me from death when in that dreaded hospital, and whose exuberant spirits and unconquerable good humour had been my companion for weeks, had passed away. Dismal thoughts were fast crowding on my imagination; but, with a violent effort, shaking them off, I bethought me that the safest and wisest plan would be to follow the Cornet's example of departing. So, echoing the word of my pale-faced ally, I shouted 'vamos;' and throwing my right leg over the cantel of my saddle, in half an hour the town of Vittoria lay full two leagues in my rear.

END OF VOL. II.

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